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CHARLES DONELAN

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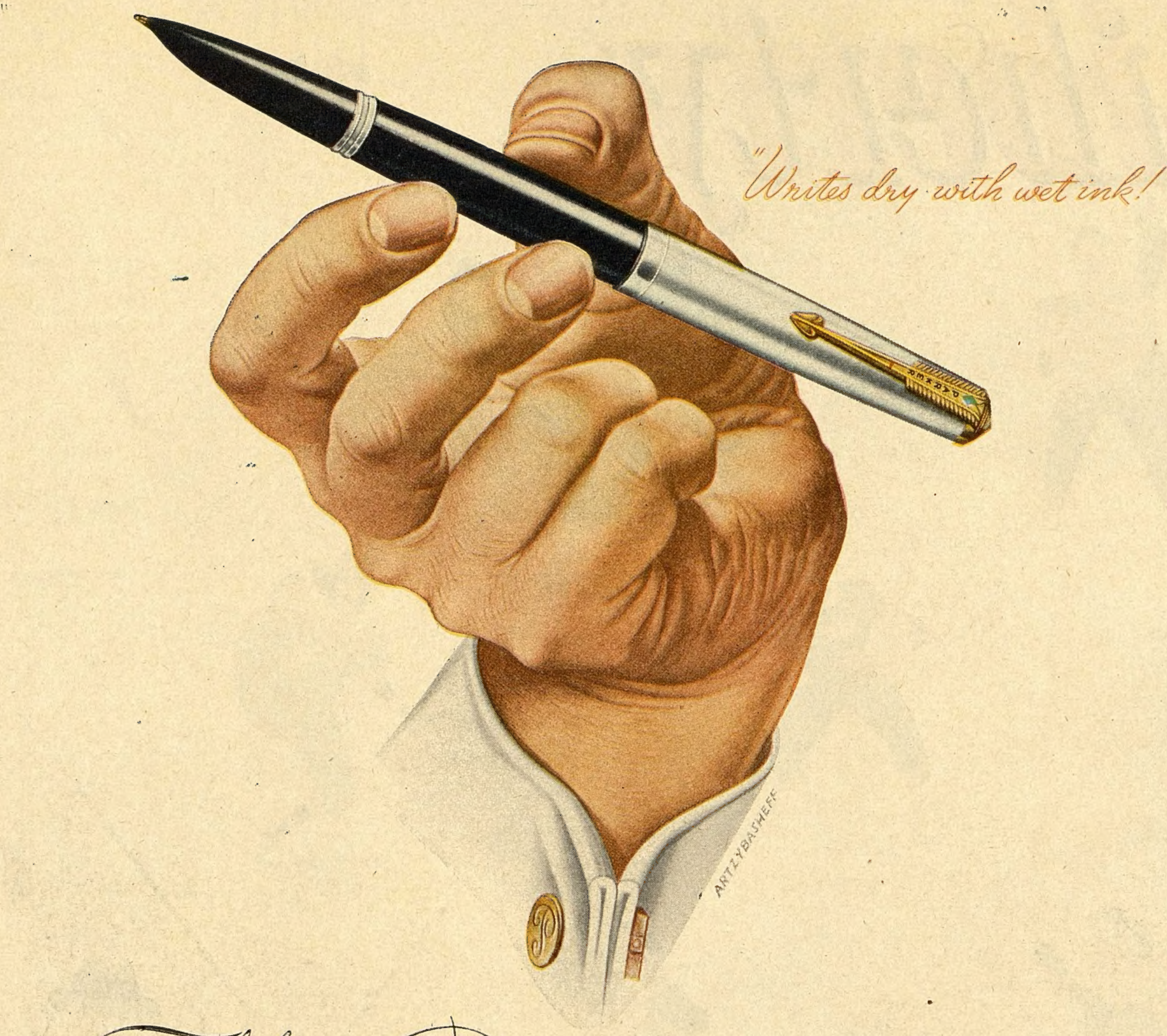
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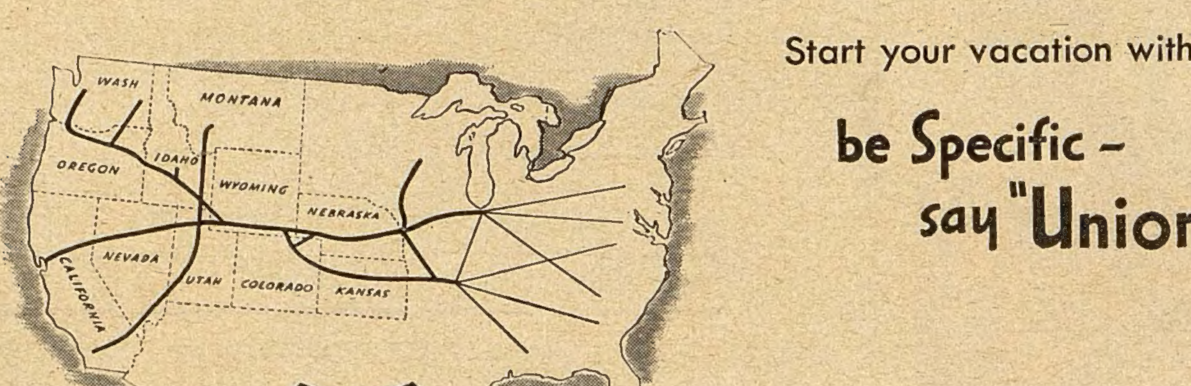

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Painted by Charles Donelan

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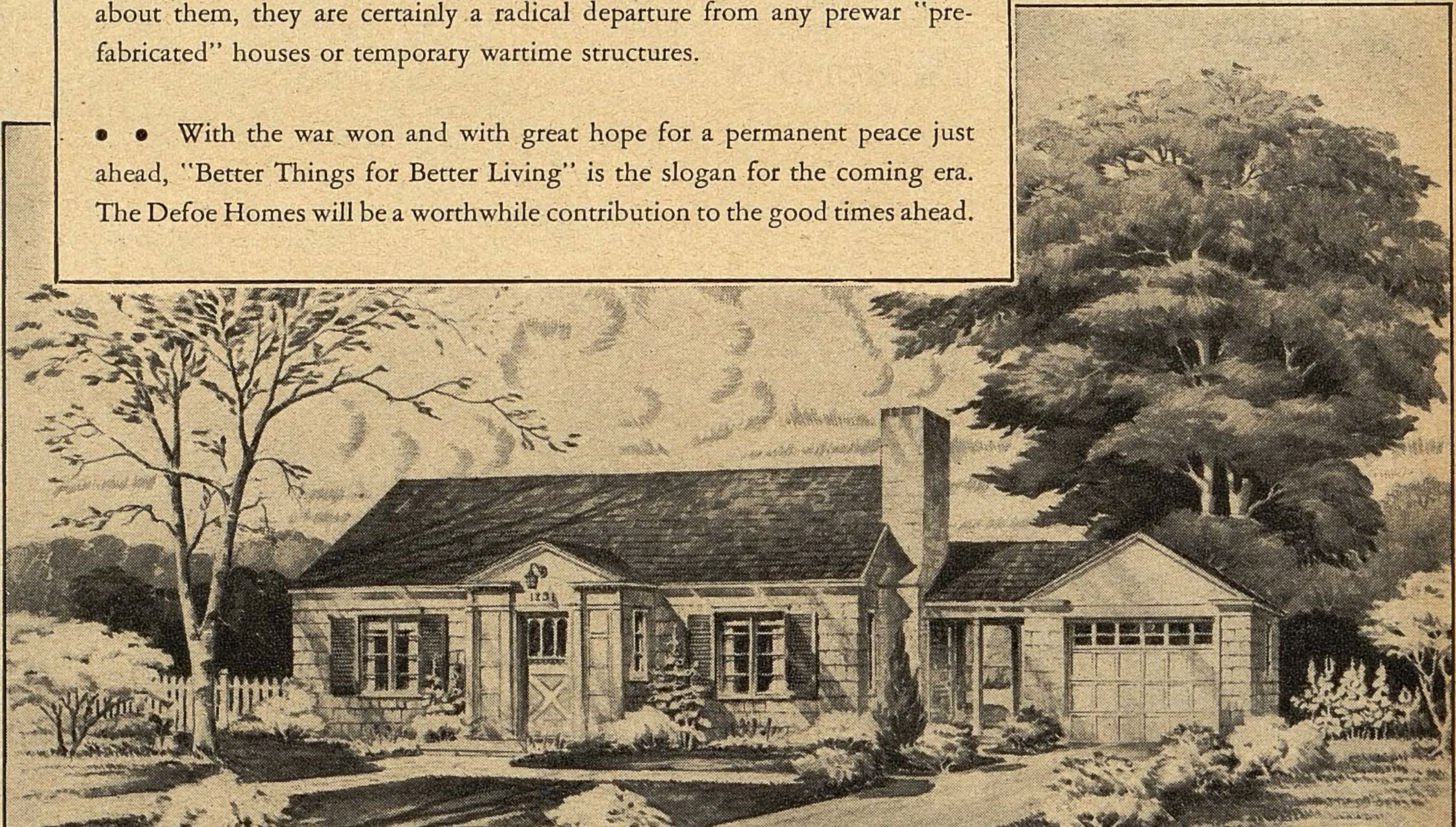
THE Housing Division of the Defoe Shipbuilding Company was developed with a two-fold purpose—to maintain, as closely as possible, the wartime employment level upon which the people of the industrial area in which the plant is located had come to depend and to offer the public a new solution to America's housing problem.

• • With this in mind, Defoe designers and engineers were called upon to create a new line of homes which would bring to their owners the comforts of functional design, the ease of maintenance made possible by modern compact construction—plus the economies of mass production methods. In addition, they must be built to outlast houses of standard construction!

• • The Defoe organization has delivered. The skill and experience acquired by more than forty years of fine workmanship and adherence to the age-old traditions of the shipbuilder's art have brought into being an entirely new concept of gracious living. The Defoe Homes reach new highs in comfort and convenience. While there is nothing fantastic or extreme about them, they are certainly a radical departure from any prewar "prefabricated" houses or temporary wartime structures.

• • With the war won and with great hope for a permanent peace just ahead, "Better Things for Better Living" is the slogan for the coming era. The Defoe Homes will be a worthwhile contribution to the good times ahead.



This attractive Cape Cod home can be erected by the Defoe system. Variations in floor plan and exterior treatment can be made to satisfy individual requirements. This, like all Defoe Homes, can be purchased with or without the breezeway and garage.

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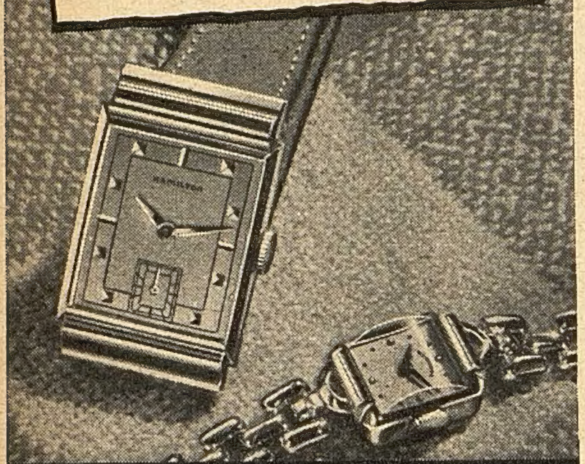

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VOX POP

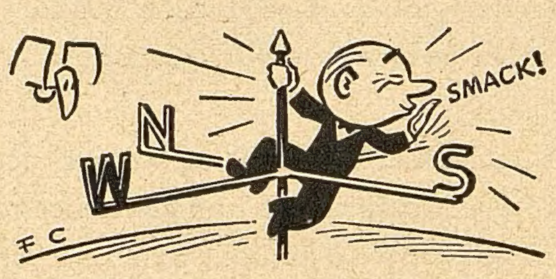
"The Voice of the People"

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

KNOXVILLE, TENN.—Poor Mr. Peter Barge! (Vox Pop, April 13.) He must be suffering from stomach ulcers or tormented with migraine.

Only a sour disposition or lack of experience could cause a man to generalize about *any* section of our country as bitterly as he does about the South.

Personally, I have collected some of my most colorful insults *above* the Mason-Dixon line.



Mr. Barge isn't sentenced to any Southern vacations and he doesn't have to grow apoplectic over the "tourist lures." We like our guests to have jolly dispositions and feel happy when they visit us, so we'd rather they spend their leisure where they are happy.

East, west, north, or south—America, we love it!—*K. Griffith Van Buren.*

CAMPUS SNAFU

NEW YORK, N. Y.—In no sense do we go along with Dean Postle on his criticisms on the colleges (Snafu on the Campus, March 30). We admit that the colleges were not ready, but who was ready for the end of the war?

Dean Postle apparently gathered a great deal of information, but he missed much more. For example, many colleges have long since adopted every one of his recommendations, except perhaps in regard to a relationship with the U. S. Employment Service. On costs, most universities have never operated at a profit, and depend on state or other appropriations and income from endowment.

Housing of veterans is far more a college problem, and the Congress was notified of this long before the fall of 1945. If Congress was to provide for education, it should have done something constructive about housing.

Education of an army, especially a married army, was never before attempted by any nation.

To expect the colleges to be ready for it 100 per cent would be too much.—EDUCATOR.

THE GRAVY TRAIN

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEX.—Senator Byrd says, "Let's stop the gravy train" (March 30). What does he mean? I am afraid that he means just what he says. He wants to take the gravy off the average American table.

There is no money economy where money is not spent. The only value money has is the value received for it. When money stops circulating, our economy breaks down.

Let's not only keep the gravy on the table, but add a little dessert, by letting private initiative meet the challenge of the day.—*Arvo Josephson.*

But what about the high cost of government?—VOX POP EDITOR.

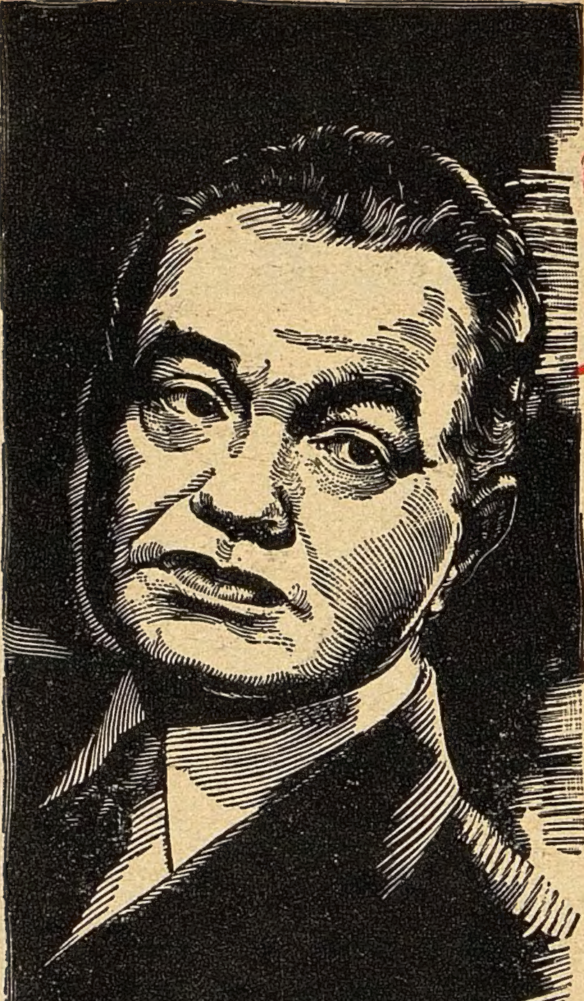
BUTTE, MONT.—Let's all assist Senator Byrd in every way in his campaign against high taxes and inflation.

And if we can't get results in any other way, we might even vote Republican!—*George Henry Ellis.*

SPY SYSTEM

PARSONS, KANS.—So the Treasury offers a reward for tax-evasion information. It pays up to 10 per cent of the tax collected and in the past ten years has paid out $650,000 in rewards and collected more than $20,000,000 in taxes. That's what Maxine Davis says in Honesty Is the Best Tax Policy (March 9). Everybody hates a spy and a snooper; yet, according to this article, the government encourages every one to be a tax-income spy against his neighbor, and pays him for his trouble. Is this a part of our democracy? Is this something to brag about?—*T. W. Branbelt.*

Is tax evasion better to brag about?—VOX POP EDITOR.



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ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Facts and figures on the Navion, a personal plane from the West Coast that's made the aviation industry sit up and take notice

HERE'S a brand-new personal airplane which isn't yet available around the country but is attracting considerable attention in the aviation industry. And well it might, for this airplane, called the Navion, has been built by North American Aviation, Inc., of Inglewood, California, a company heretofore concerned exclusively with military airplanes, of which the B-25 Mitchell attack bomber and the P-51 Mustang fighter are the best known.

The Navion is a slick-looking job and is definitely out of the beginners' class. It represents some of the best engineering skill that has thus far gone into the personal-plane field. No price has yet been announced.

Here's the set-up. The Navion is powered with a Continental 185-h.p. air-cooled engine which provides a cruising speed of about 150 miles an hour. It will carry four passengers and its cruising range is 700 miles.

This performance is what cross-country flyers have long wanted—enough power and speed to get somewhere, for those who have the know-how of cross-country piloting. If the price is low enough, North American should find a good market available.

The Navion is a low-wing, side-by-side dual-control plane and features a new and specially designed wing which gives the plane unusual aileron control at low speeds when approaching the stall. It was North American that first applied successfully the laminar flow theory in a production airplane—which accounted in large part for the performance of the P-51 Mustang. Through this design the engineers achieved a smooth and gradual flow of air over the wing-tip section, and this principle has been applied to the Navion to give it fine flight characteristics without loss of performance.

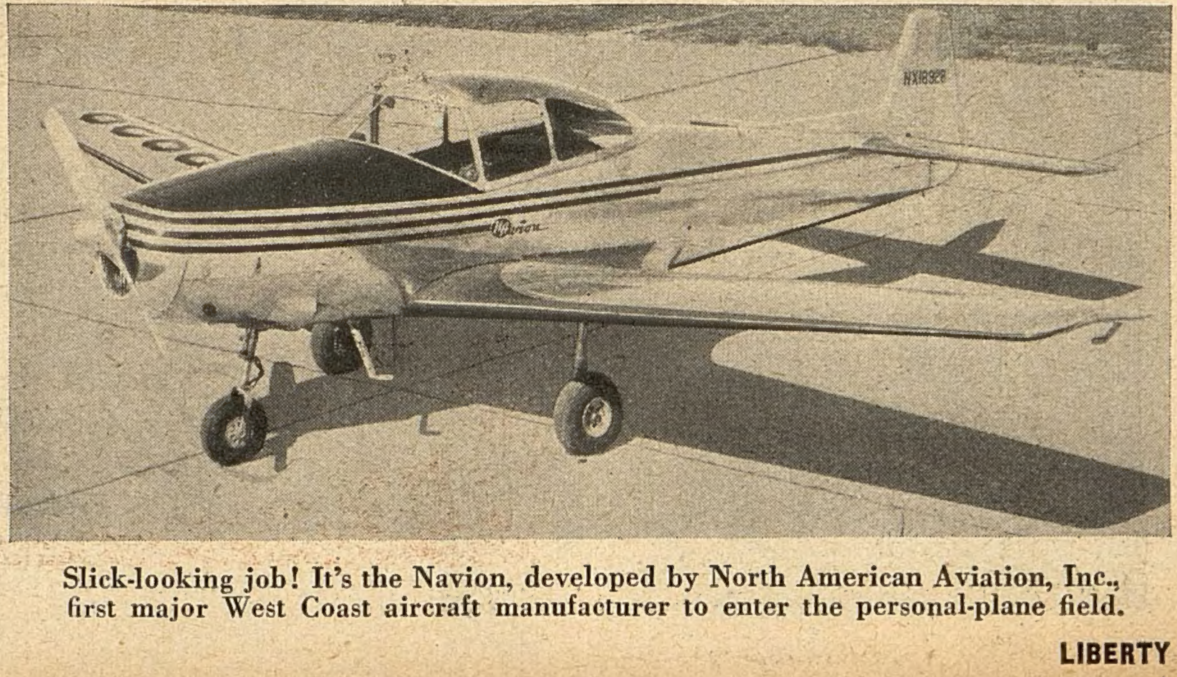
Another important feature of the Navion is a powered retractable tricycle landing gear with a 20-degree steerable nose wheel for easy handling on the ground. Powered retractable landing gears have been features of expensive airplanes in the past.

With seats for four persons and ample luggage provisions, the Navion is adequate for most recreational and business purposes. The interior has all the luxury of a fine automobile.

Other data are: wing span, 33 feet, 5 inches; length, 27 feet; height, 9 feet; empty weight, 1,551 pounds; useful load, 1,019 pounds; gross weight, 2,570 pounds. Besides the passenger and luggage weight, the useful load includes ten quarts of oil and forty gallons of gasoline in the two twenty-gallon pressed-steel wing tanks.

Fully loaded, the Navion will take off in a 695-foot ground run and climb at approximately 830 feet a minute. The stalling speed is approximately fifty-three miles an hour, and it will land at approximately fifty-four miles an hour with 40-degree flaps.

In the weeks to come, we'll be telling you of other developments in the personal-plane field.



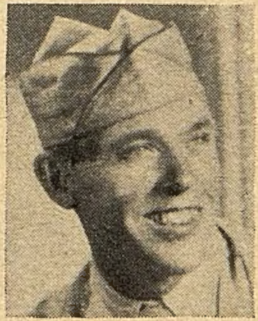
Slick-looking job! It's the Navion, developed by North American Aviation, Inc., first major West Coast aircraft manufacturer to enter the personal-plane field.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

HISTORIAN AT HOME

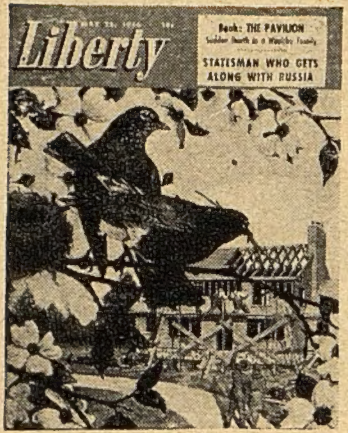
If you're looking for Waverley Root, chances are you can find him at home in Rockport, Mass., executing a crescendo on the piano, meditating over a chessboard, or writing the fourth volume of the Secret History of the War. One wall of his workroom faces the sea and is made chiefly of glass, but the scenery is not nearly so distracting as the noise of a newspaper city room. And Mr. Root has been a habitué of city rooms since 1927, when he became an international journalist in Paris. He's also indulged in radio commentating here and abroad; and his daily newspaper column still goes out to readers in North and South America, Europe and Australia. His article, THE LION AND THE BEAR, is on page 13.

HOPSON—PAST AND PRESENT

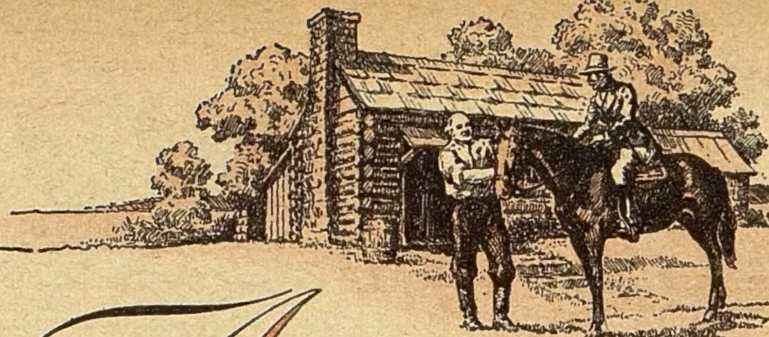


William Hopson has an eye for women, a taste for tequila and whisky, and a stomach for bullfights. He also has a past—as cowpuncher, threshing hand, hobo, carnival clown, parachute jumper, wing walker, and barnstorming aviator. He guesses he's the only civilian ever shot down in a plane. (A duck hunter did it when Hopson dived for the ducks he was stalking.) When the farmers quit handing out gas from their tractors for family sky rides, Hopson grounded his plane and bought a typewriter. Seven novels and more than 200 stories were the result. See page 14 for his latest opus, BORDER BULLFIGHT.

NEXT WEEK



Can Russia and the Western democracies get along? Eduard Benes, President of the proudest and freest republic in Europe, believes they can. And he's proving it right under Stalin's nose. Maurice Hindus calls him DOCTOR OF REASON. Here's why . . . If you want to get away from it all, the Pan-American Highway to Mexico City is for you. Absalom Jackson, Jr., who's made the trip, tells you about it in THE HIGHROAD TO MEXICO . . . For a gripping tale of a beautiful girl's struggle to banish a family curse, read Liberty's Book Condensation, THE PAVILION, by Hilda Lawrence.



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VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

SUPER-SENIORITY—or whom can the veteran bump for a job?—is still a hotly debated problem in the government's program for full employment of veterans. Returning servicemen have been given the impression that the law compels their former employers to rehire them, even if it means replacing a man who has greater seniority.

Although the Selective Service director, Major General Lewis B. Hershey, says only 300 veterans have had enough trouble reclaiming their jobs to take their cases to court, there is no record of the number of veterans who, out of ignorance or timidity, have not pressed their cases. Indications are that this number runs high enough to make the re-employment issue of major importance. A recent survey of 10,000 enlisted men awaiting discharge at Fort Dix reveals that 50 per cent plan to return to their jobs.

Many veterans who are refused reinstatement in their old jobs merely shrug and shuffle off in bewilderment. They know there is a law backing them up, but they can't see working for a disgruntled employer, or fighting a strong union.

The employers are in a fix too. Most of them are earnest in wanting to give the vets their old jobs back, but naturally their appreciation of long-service employees induces them, in many cases, to favor those above returned vet employees of much shorter service and less experience. In many such instances, the boss will go to great length in making a place for the vet.

The law governing re-employment of veterans is part of the Selective Service Act of 1940 and provides that a veteran, honorably discharged, who applies for reinstatement within ninety days and is still qualified to perform the duties of his former position, is entitled to be reinstated in that job (assuming conditions haven't drastically changed) for a period of one year. As it stands, the law is in need of amendment by Congress to prevent any interpretation but one.

This is necessary to prevent decisions such as the one recently rendered by the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals to the effect that Congress, in assuring draftees a year's re-employment, did not mean that veterans could bump nonveterans with greater seniority. The verdict was warmly received by some branches of organized labor, but not by Selective Service. It was immediately ap-

VETERANS
MUST COME HOME
JOBS
PAYLINES
NOT
BREADLINES
OUT-OF-TOWN
NEWSPAPERS
The New York Times
"All the News That's Fit to Print"

ACME PHOTO

"Veterans must come home to JOBS." With union labor opposing super-seniority for veterans, last summer's C.I.O. jobs-for-all placards are worth another look.

pealed. The case is now in the hands of the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, General Hershey is determined to stand by his own ruling that the veteran's re-employment right supersedes seniority, union membership, and all other factors not specified by law. "When the law was passed," he told the Bulletin Board, "there were no ifs, ands, or buts. Seniority or super-seniority, or whether a man has blue eyes or brown eyes, was not the issue. The only issue was getting the veteran his old job back. Only when it was unreasonable or impossible to do this was the employer entitled to plead exemption."

Our own feeling is that the law needs reworking and rewording to make its meaning clear. While this is being done, it might also be a good idea to set the law on its own feet by making it a separate piece of legislation which will not expire when the Selective Service Act passes out of the picture.

* * *

Pfc. Everett Markey, Camp Shanks, N. Y. A total of 1,725,344 Army decorations and awards were received by Army personnel from December 7, 1941, to November 30, 1945. (This doesn't include Purple Hearts.) The Air Corps got the bulk of the decorations, with 1,162,087 Air Medals alone. This award is based, generally, on number of combat missions flown. Privates first class led by a wide margin all grades of officers and enlisted men in the number of decorations for heroism. You can tell that one to your First Sergeant, and the War Department will back you up!

* * *

Albert Barnaby, Duluth, Minn. I'm all for the bill sponsoring the exchange of American and foreign students, to be financed by foreign countries in payment for our overseas surplus property. This looks to me like a good way of bringing about international understanding. Of greatest interest to the Bulletin Board is the fact that such a plan would absorb hundreds of veterans who are being squeezed out by overcrowding in our schools. Students from abroad would, of course, have to wait till the current rush subsides before we could take them in.

* * *

Mrs. John Paris, Newcastle, Ind. It seems to me the bank was justified in turning down your husband's request for an increase in his home loan to the full amount permitted under the G.I. Bill. They probably felt that if, as you planned, he took on one more job in addition to eight hours a day making tools, plus five hours a day making window shades, plus getting up in time to milk the cows and feed the stock, he'd turn into a whirling dervish. Since there isn't much demand for that accomplishment in this country, he'd be a poor credit risk.

* * *

Pvt. Llyle Reeb, Keesler Field, Miss. The green-and-white ribbon you asked about was approved by the War Department in December, 1945. It is awarded "for meritorious service rendered by members of the armed forces, serving in any capacity since 7 December 1941, not in sustained operational activities against an enemy nor in direct support of such operation."

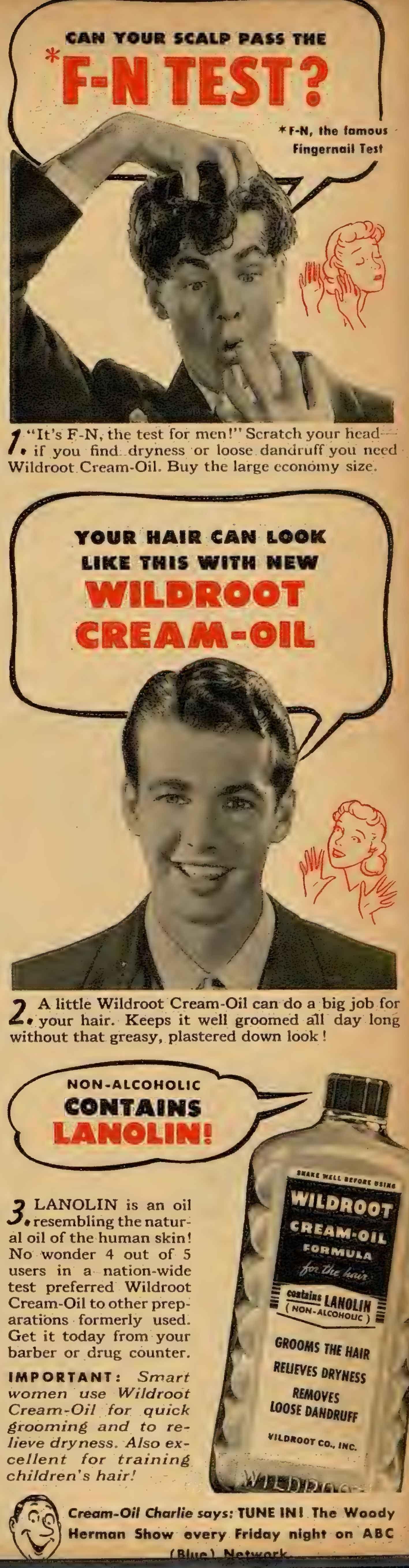
* * *

T/4 Jonas Robertson, APO 374, New York, N. Y. I had to read that news release twice, too, Sergeant. But there it was, in black and white! The Veterans Administration has ruled that a man who re-enlists in any of the services can go to school during the period of his enlistment, at government expense. The G.I. Bill says, "Any person who served actively for 90 days on or after September 16, 1940, and prior to the termination of the present war, is entitled to education." You must, of course, meet character-of-discharge requirements of the Bill, and your studies must not interfere with your military duties. You can go to an approved school anywhere in the world, part time, or take correspondence courses—all without subsistence allowance. Then, if you leave service permanently at the end of your first enlistment, you'll be able to continue your education for free on the time piled up during that enlistment, up to the four-year limit.

* * *

Mrs. Charles Averell, Havre, Mont. It is not true that *any* beneficiary, in order to claim death benefits of National Service Life Insurance, must be "a pauper." But in a few cases the beneficiary would have to be dependent, and yours happens to be one of these. Your son, at the time of his death on Corregidor, had not applied for service insurance. Evidently this was true of more than a few servicemen in the early days of the war, for the government at that time ordered that any person captured on or after December 7, 1941, and before April 20, 1942, who did not have insurance in force, would be considered as having applied for $5,000, premiums to be paid by the government during his confinement and for six months thereafter. In case of death during captivity, death benefits were payable to the widow or child, or *dependent* mother or father. You were not dependent on your son for support, therefore you were ineligible to receive payment.

VETERANS! The Bulletin Board is your department, the watchdog of your interests—written and edited by a combat veteran of World War II. Make the most of it! Write in your gripes and your ideas. No names will be used without permission. Address Veterans' Bulletin Board, c/o Liberty, 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.



CAN YOUR SCALP PASS THE

*F-N TEST?

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1. "It's F-N, the test for men!" Scratch your head—if you find dryness or loose dandruff you need Wildroot Cream-Oil. Buy the large economy size.

YOUR HAIR CAN LOOK LIKE THIS WITH NEW WILDROOT CREAM-OIL

2. A little Wildroot Cream-Oil can do a big job for your hair. Keeps it well groomed all day long without that greasy, plastered down look!

NON-ALCOHOLIC CONTAINS LANOLIN!

3. LANOLIN is an oil resembling the natural oil of the human skin! No wonder 4 out of 5 users in a nation-wide test preferred Wildroot Cream-Oil to other preparations formerly used. Get it today from your barber or drug counter.

IMPORTANT: *Smart women use Wildroot Cream-Oil for quick grooming and to relieve dryness. Also excellent for training children's hair!*

Cream-Oil Charlie says: TUNE IN! The Woody Herman Show every Friday night on ABC (Blue) Network.

The best way to travel...

... see your Texaco Dealer first!

It's here at last . . . the long-hoped-for day when you can climb into your car and push off for far places.

The best way to plan your trip . . . *see your Texaco Dealer first.*

He'll have our Texaco Touring Service experts send you the easiest, pleasantest, most economical routing for your trip.

Speedily available from Texaco Touring Service you get up-to-the-minute road information that charts *both* the most direct and the scenic routes for your trip.

TEXACO TOURING SERVICE

All America is waiting for you again. "Fill 'er up" at your Texaco Dealer's . . . and GO.

You're welcome at

TEXACO DEALERS

where you get...

FIRE-CHIEF GASOLINE

FIRE-CHIEF GASOLINE

Sky Chief

SKY CHIEF GASOLINE

HAVOLINE
TEXACO MOTOR OIL

HAVOLINE AND TEXACO MOTOR OILS

MARFAK Lubrication

MARFAK LUBRICATION

TEXACO
REG. T. M.

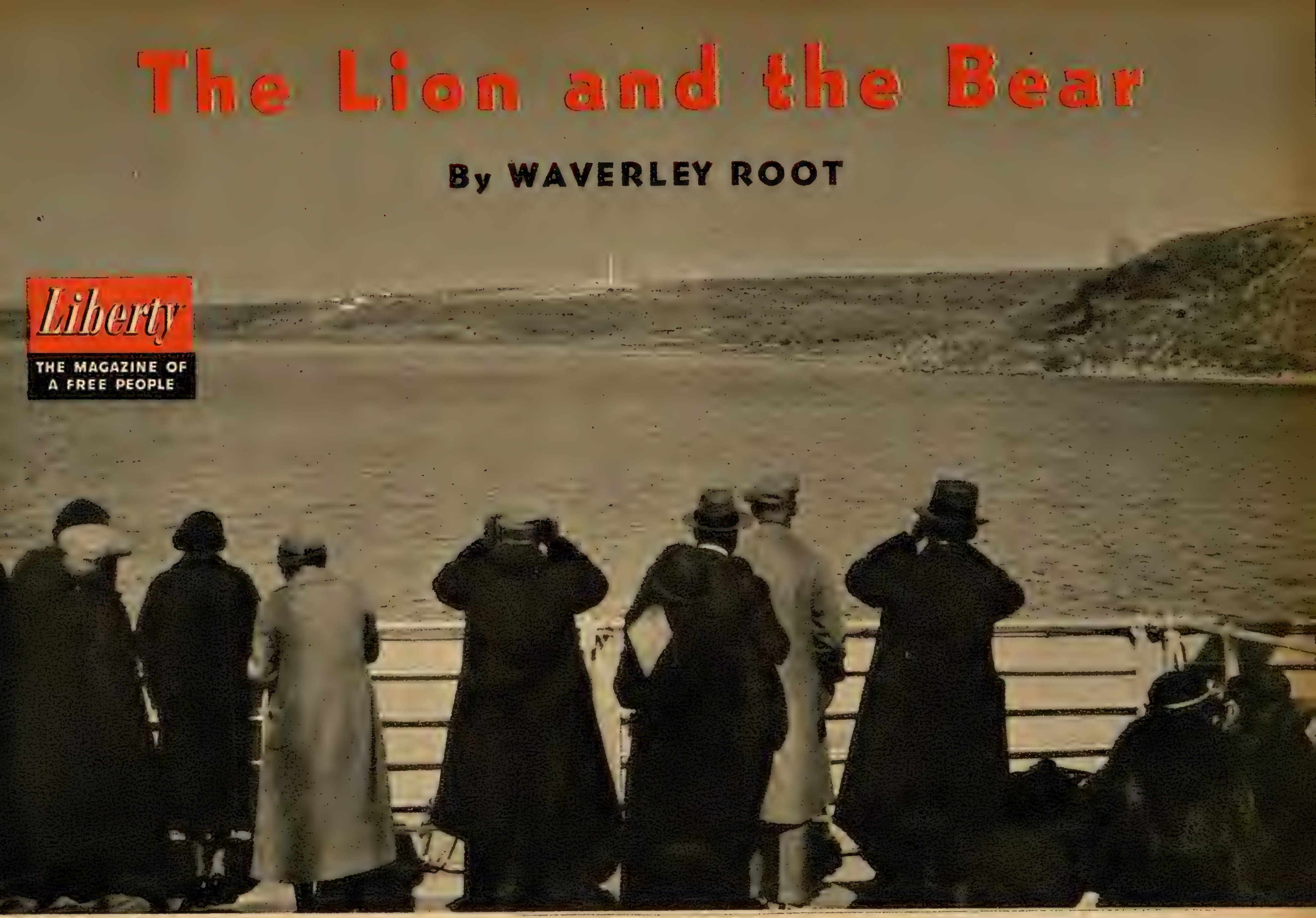
THE TEXAS COMPANY

TUNE IN . . . Texaco Star Theatre every Sunday night starring James Melton, with his guest, Ed Wynn. See newspapers for time and stations.

The Lion and the Bear

By WAVERLEY ROOT

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE



BURTON HOLMES PHOTO FROM EWING GALLOWAY.

Going through the narrow section of the Dardanelles, which Russia now wants to control, passengers aboard a liner gaze at the glistening monument erected for British and Turkish soldiers who died fighting for this historic bottleneck in the first World War.

The struggle shaping up in the Middle East may decide the fate of every human being. An expert tells you where and why two great empires are at odds and what the alternatives are to another war

AT the very birthplace of history—the Near and Middle East—where the secret services of the world have been locked in unreported struggles for generations, the future course of history is being decided.

Two empires are fighting for control of this solar plexus of world communications—the old empire of Britain, badly weakened in the war, and the new empire of Russia, tested, toughened, and fired with expansionist ambition.

The stakes for both Russia and Britain in the Near East are the same: communications, security, oil. The only difference is that Britain is trying to hold what she has already gained. Russia is trying to acquire what is not yet hers.

Domination of the Middle East has been an objective of British imperial policy as long as there has been a British Empire. Through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea runs the vital life line of empire communications which links India and the British territories of the East to the homeland. Along that life line, surrounding land areas constrict the sea lane dangerously at four points. The first is the entrance to the Mediterranean, where Britain stands guard at Gibraltar. The second is halfway along the length of the inland sea, where the boot of Italy stretches out toward the Tunisian peninsula. Here the outpost is Malta. The third is the Suez Canal, linking the Mediterranean and Red seas. The fourth and last is the exit from the Red Sea, at the strait of Bab el Mandeb, where Britain has established a base at Aden.

It is Suez which is the most vulnerable and hence the most important. At the other three points, one defending base suffices. At Suez, British policy has been directed toward control of the entire region. Britain maintains a naval base at Alexandria; holds the island of Cyprus; exercises a sort of protectorate over Egypt; insists on exerting her influence in Greece; governs Palestine and Transjordania under mandate; and enjoys a special position in Iraq by virtue of her treaty with that country, formerly a British mandate.

The war wiped out the influences of Germany and Italy in the Near and Middle East. And the Syrians, secretly encouraged by the British, took advantage of France's weakened condition to ease the French out of their mandate over Syria and Lebanon. Britain seemed to have gained her long-pursued objective: unchallenged command in the Near East.

Unchallenged? Not quite. She had disposed of her old rivals, but new ones appeared. The most formidable was Russia.

By a strange paradox, Russia, though a self-contained nation without far-flung colonial possessions, finds that her vital line of communications is exactly parallel with Britain's. That paradox consists in the fact that though Russia holds the greatest single land mass in the world, she is almost completely shut off from year-round access to the high seas. She wants warm-water ports. That desire is as permanent and as cardinal an article in her policy as maintenance of the empire

(*Continued on page 64*)

CANTINA
FERRO
Ah... que sabroso!
CIA. INDUS

This matador may have lace on his pants, but he can move fast on those moccasins. His blanket, called a muleta, hides a long sword.

A bullfight to you may be a spectacle full of glamor, cheering señoritas, and handsome matadors, but here's what it looks like to the bull

Border Bullfight

By WILLIAM HOPSON

A HALF mile ahead the town sprawls out on the dry ugly plain just across the international boundary line. You pass under the stucco arch of the American immigration building and head for the Mexican side. There, a brown-faced official steps out and peers politely into your car. You tell him you're going to the bull ring.

He waves you on. You enter the main street of the town, which is wide and curtained by dust raised by the heavy Sunday-afternoon traffic.

The bull ring is a mile south of town. There is a pretty good crowd milling around the entrance by the time you arrive and get your camera loaded.

que sabroso!

PHOTOS FROM FPG.

If the bull displays a passive disposition, cape men goad him.

FUERST PHOTO FROM BLACK STAR

Insolent grace vs. bovine indecision. The stands are hushed.

The ring is as round as a silver dollar, about 150 feet across, and every grain of sand seems clean and in place. The seats are circular tiers of heavy timbers rising to the outer top of the adobe wall. The top of the wall bristles with Mexican soldiers every few feet; lean, leather-faced, taciturn fellows carrying Mauser rifles.

Soon the seats are filled, the band strikes up a snappy air, and through a gate at the opposite side of the arena comes the star matador, leading his retinue. The matador's appearance sets the crowd off into excited yells. He doesn't look like the pictures of matadors that you've seen. He's a big potbellied man of about fifty, in a huge white sombrero with roll brim and high-peaked crown, white silk shirt, red sash around the waist, holding up tight-fitting bell-bottom pantaloons with lace in fancy designs from thigh to ankle. He wears regular cowpuncher boots and has a Barney Oldfield cigar stub stuck in one corner of his mouth.

BLACK STAR PHOTO

The ring is a 150-foot circle, but the action's often at close quarters.

He keeps on bowing until you forget him and study the others, lean young fellows as wiry as cats, who really look like matadors in their brilliant bolero jackets, knee breeches, and stockings. They wear a kind of moccasin footgear in which they can run almost as fast backward as they can forward. In their blank faces is the same kind of look you see in those of the soldiers ringing the wall above—passiveness, patience, no fear, and the knowledge that they know their business. All except one, a runt of a man who struts like a bantam rooster.

There are about six of them altogether, plus two picadors, also gaily costumed, riding broken-down horses. The horses are followed by two young men, who are there to beat the horses and make them move into the bulls. The right sides of the horses are protected by mattresses thick enough to withstand the lunging bulls' short horns. The horses' right eyes are bandaged to prevent their seeing the bull.

At a signal, a trumpet sounds, and from out of a tunnel at one side of the arena rushes a brown three-year-old fighting bull with wicked black horns. As he bursts through into the sunlight, a Mexican leaning expectantly over the fence above the tunnel jabs two beribboned stickers into his back.

The crowd lets out a roar, and the bull, wild-eyed, half blinded in the strong light, its belly burning from swabbed turpentine, makes a run at the nearest cape. He makes another run or two, begins to regain full eyesight, gets scared, and runs away. This brings derisive haw-haws and hand clapping from the *aficionados*. For the next five minutes they try to make him fight, but it's no soap. He's got but one thought in mind—and that's the hell with the whole business.

The trumpet blows again, signal for the picadors to enter, spurring their corseted nags while the two men comprising the ground crew beat the horses on the rump. One of the picadors is about seventy. He edges his horse over toward the reluctant bull, a long wooden spear with a short thick point braced under his right arm. He goes about it with as little concern as you'd go into the corner drugstore and eat a sundae. He circles the wary bull. Suddenly the animal drops his head and lunges.

His short black horns bury themselves to the hilt in the mattress, half lifting the grunting horse off the ground. The picador braces himself and lines the stubby point of the spear at the bull's heaving shoulder. The metal goes in about an inch or so, and when the stung bull leaps clear there is a trickle of bright crimson working its way down through the sleek brown hair.

Right then he loses that the-hell-with-it attitude. An angry bawl of rage comes out of him and he starts to clear the ring. For about five minutes he's the central figure in the middle of red and yellow capes, whirling, lunging, goring wildly at elusive somethings he is never able to hook. In no time at all he's alone in the middle of the ring with a wiry young pockmarked Mexican in front of him, tantalizing him with a yellow cape. He's beginning to pant a little and that aw-the-hell-with-it look is coming back.

But he's about to change his mind in a hurry again, for a young matador is walking into the center of the ring carrying two barbed *banderillas*, or short spears. They are all red and blue ribbons and are about two feet in length. The fishhook-like barbs are to prevent them from being slung out once they are embedded in the bull's shoulders. The barbs also have been dipped in turpentine.

The bull spots the approaching figure and momentarily forgets the cape, now motionless in front of him. He wheels and lunges at the man with the two *ban-*

(Continued on page 62)

RITTLINGER PHOTO FROM BLACK STAR

Death stroke: a deft sword thrust between shoulder bones.

Larynx Unlimited

Mel Blanc is in your living room at least four nights a week, and at your neighborhood theatre the rest of the time. Yet you probably don't know him

BY RUTH BERMAN

EARLY this year Jack Benny was dubbed honorary mayor of Anaheim, Azusa, and Cucamonga, three whistle stops between his home and Los Angeles. This honor he owes to the anonymous train caller on his program who put those three towns on the national map.

Tune in on Benny and catch the trainman's call: "Train leaving on track five for Anaheim, Azusa, and Cucamonga." In the next half hour you'll hear, too, a French violin teacher, a sassy parrot, and a detective with squeaky shoes. Then try to believe that one man, Mel Blanc, is the voice behind all four of them.

To Hollywood, Mel's a one-man stock company. To his friends, he's a modest mimic with a versatile set of vocal cords. To uninitiated listeners, he's the little guy who isn't there.

But every dial twister has heard him on one station or another. His radio voices are famous; since 1937 he has worked with almost every top-flight comedian in the business, from Joe Penner to Jimmy Durante. He can show you how the head of a worm sounds when it's conversing with the tail, or how a cowboy from Brooklyn behaves at a football game. He hasn't a prop to his name, yet, with one exception, every personality he plays is completely different from the rest.

His versatile performances on four major network shows a week recently won him Radio Life's distinguished achievement award as the outstanding supporting character on the air.

Take Pedro, the gardener on the Judy Canova show, Mel's character who gets the most fan mail. Mel conjured him up after chatting with a Mexican laborer near his home in Playa del Rey, a suburb of Los Angeles. Pedro's greeting, "Pardon me for talking in your face, señorita," is now a Saturday-night institution. Any resemblance to the Happy Postman's weekly adieu to Gracie Allen, "Good-by, Mrs. Burns, and remember, keep smiling," seems absurd. Yet both of them—and a lot more—are brothers under Mel's inspired epiglottis.

He's the cigar-store clerk for Burns and Allen; he's the Russian movie director, Cartoony Technicolorvitch, for Abbott and Costello; he's the hayseed, Mr. Wortle, and the Hiccup character for Judy Canova. And for all of them he's a vocal stag line of last-minute extras, far exceeding fifty-seven varieties.

His sixth sense for timing gives his gags added punch. As an ad libber, he rates in Fred Allen's class. One Sunday night when he was playing the parrot on the Benny show, the script called for Benny to coax a chicken to lay an egg. All the while Phil Harris' orchestra was playing Hold Tight in the background. In rehearsal, Benny was growing desperate trying to coax the egg. Then Mel, with a sudden burst

Blanc is the voice of Bugs Bunny, but it irks him: he hates carrots.

of cackling, clucked, "O. K., Benny, where do you want me to put it?" That one stayed in the broadcast.

Along Radio Row they say, "If there's a voice that's impossible to do, page Blanc." Several months ago the Dinah Shore show was bottlenecked in rehearsal, sound-effects men fiddled aimlessly with their gadgets, the producer tore his hair, and the sponsor was muttering threats. In strolled Mel, inconspicuous in a blue business suit. With twinkling eye, he meandered up to the mike, wiggled his Adam's apple, and another crisis was overcome. Radio's gifted pinch hitter had saved the script and added another character to his zany collection—a talking horse with an intermittent neigh.

For that matter, Blanc could even sub for the orchestra. He did it once for Benny. Using only his hands and his talented mouth, he gave out with an imitation of an electric organ that brought down the house.

BLANC is all things to all listeners. Fan letters seek to describe him from the voices he does. In one he's a sawed-off tub of butter; in another, he's a long lean drink of water; in a third, he's Adonis in person. Mel grins, looks in the mirror and writes back: "I'm thirty-eight years old, five feet nine inches tall, weigh 180 pounds, have black hair and brown eyes." And he encloses a picture to prove it.

He has been mistaken for everything from a bearded octogenarian to a male bobby-soxer, but only once for a lunatic at large. That was purely unintentional. Waiting at a red light on Hollywood Boulevard last fall, he suddenly realized that traffic had stopped completely; pedestrians, drivers, and the cop on duty were all staring at him. Mel turned a brilliant vermilion and drove on fast. Preoccupied, he had been making like a duck.

Mel hasn't dumped all his vocal eggs in one basket; he also speaks for the animal kingdom in the movies. If you've ever seen Bugs Bunny, you've heard Mel. Without him, Bugs, Porky Pig, Daffy Duck, Tweedy Bird, and 90 per cent of all Warner Brothers' male cartoon characters would be deaf and dumb. With him, they're articulate, they're amusing, and they make money.

Bugs Bunny still causes him a little trouble, because Bugs is forever crunching carrots, and Mel hates them.

Mel studies a picture of the animal, conjures up a voice, and makes a recording. Inflection is extremely important, for the cartoon is then animated to the record. Nine years ago, when he got his first Warner contract, it took him half a day to cut a record. Now he needs only half an hour, and gets screen credits for his pains—an honor virtually unique in cartoon cinema.

Only two of his characters have identical voices: Porky Pig, one of his favorites, and Private Snafu, the civilian Sad Sack he created for Bob Hope last year. But for Porky, Mel interpolates a grunt here and there. Then the technicians who regulate sound-track speed give Porky a higher tone.

Mel says this business of doubling for assorted types of man and beast is a pushover. You merely throw your voice. Toss it into high with nasal variations and tremolos; or bounce it into low with deep bass growls. The nasal voice is the most difficult, because it's achieved with a "closed throat"; the low bass, the easiest. Mel has it all down to a system. He can trumpet like an elephant, chatter like a monkey, or hiccup like a drunkard. Colds never trip him up. He's above all that. He simply speaks, as he puts it, "over his cold."

Much of his work, particularly with animals, depends on imagination. But he's a stickler for authenticity when it comes to actual people. A couple of months back he drew the role of a German announcer on Judy Canova's program. He could have faked the part, but instead he went straight to Judy's hus- *(Continued on page 88)*

Even a train caller is entitled to protest at an obbligato by Benny.

The pusillanimous postman on the Burns and Allen show? Same guy!

PHOTOS BY JACK ALBIN

MacArthur

HOLLYMAN PHOTO FROM MONKMEYER

Young Japanese women find that Allied occupation, far from imposing bondage, has opened the gates to a new world. Already they work, vote—even argue with men.

SOON after MacArthur's forces arrived in Japan, cutting the fetters on free speech as they came, women for the first time began sounding off in letters to newspaper editors. One even recommended that the emperor be sacked. Her letter became the topic of street-car conversation among women for several days. "An unusually bold woman," they commented.

She was bold not alone because of the nature of her suggestion but also because she had spoken up at all. In Japan it has never been the custom for women to sound off. If a woman tried it in public, she was laughingly ignored, or, if she became troublesome, jailed; and if she became too outspoken at home, it was quite in order for her husband to belt her across the mouth and, if she persisted, throw her out of the house, to be divorced without questions asked, deprived of her children, and scorned by all who knew her.

Now that the Japanese woman has been admitted to the society in which, up to now, she enjoyed about the same status as a domestic animal—now that she can write letters to the editor—one of the biggest questions in Japan, especially to the male side of the population, is, what is she going to do about it?

Possibly hearing small inner whisperings that their dominion left something to be desired, the men are intrigued by the question because they know that women eligible to vote outnumber them by 2,700,000. The voting age, for both sexes, is twenty.

There are a few women of exceptional enlightenment who plan to do plenty. They already have large, if cautious, followings, and they are working hard to awaken the feminine masses to an active appreciation of the new deal that has come to them. What success these leaders will have in getting women to vote in the coming election, and how freely and intelligently they can get them to use their own judgment in this first trip to the polls, is problematical.

Japan's women, prisoners for centuries in a man's world, are feeling the first faint stirrings of freedom in their breasts—with surprising results

ACME PHOTO

Yoshido Kudo, politician. She heads the newly formed New Japan Ladies' Party.

When the Allies landed, the woman had no iota of right, either in her own home or in the world outside it. It is significant that many of Japan's best known women have records of divorce and jail, the penalties imposed by husband and society for asserting a measure of autonomy.

To hold recalcitrance to a minimum, woman's conditioning began at infancy. If she went through middle or high school, the point at which woman's education was considered sufficient, and she still yearned for learning, the thing to do, if she belonged to the middle or upper classes, was to bear down on floral arrangement and the tea ceremony. No lady was a lady without skill in these empty arts. But if she wanted a university education, it was necessary to pause some four years in a women's college, to pick up the things they didn't teach her in middle school and which were required to qualify her for admission to the university. There were other things to weigh against the ad-

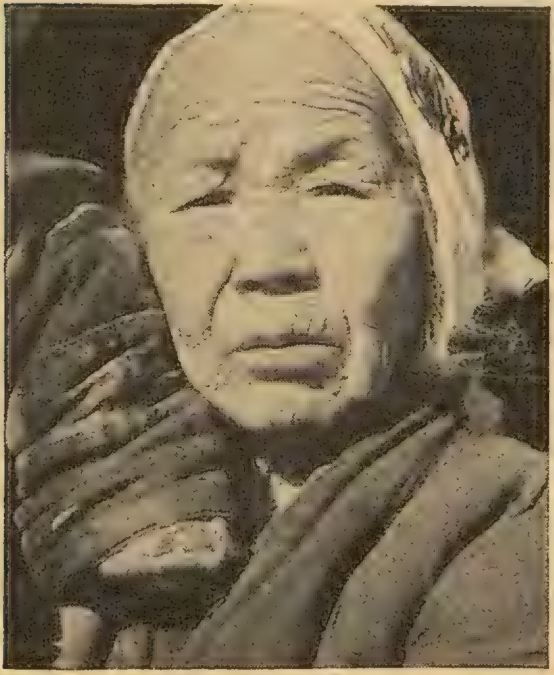
Frees Mrs. Moto

BY VICTOR BOESEN

vantages of a university degree. There are only two women's colleges in Japan, both founded by American missionaries. These might not have room for her. Then there was the matter of where a woman with a university sheepskin would be allowed to turn, for there was no place for her in the business world. She could not own property. There was a custom against this as effective as if it were a law.

She might find a place in the government, but there was a low ceiling on her rise here. She was barred from all executive posts and, being barred from this level, could not hope ever to step up to an official position. This was a constitutional law.

So women with ambition generally steered away from government as a bad bet. They turned to the professions: writing and medicine, mostly. A few took up law, but here again they were soon headed off, by indirection. A woman lawyer aspiring to become a judge found nothing in her way, except that she was forbidden to take the qualifying examination. As to politics, there was a law against women holding political meetings, attending political meetings, or organizing politically.



A typical older Japanese woman. Long held in fear, she dares not speak up.

The only work wide open to them was in the textile industry. Women belonged in the home, propagating the race and waiting on their husbands, though the government in the early days of the Axis tie-up, conveniently found it more virtuous for women to work than to produce young. All from sixteen to forty without husbands were drafted to the factories, farms, and offices.

Finding nothing in the lower-case jobs, the ambitious woman might consider the stage or the modeling profession. But this would entail a fairly thick skin, for actresses and models are looked down upon. One never publicly claims them as friends.

While she contemplated a university education, the ambitious woman did well to bear in mind, too, that men didn't like smart women. With men in total control, this factor could not be ignored. Men on an intellectual par with them might seek their society for the stimulation of it, but would not marry them.

If her spirit for higher education broke after weighing its mean returns, and she decided in favor of marriage instead of a career, she found the constrictions even more severe.

First, she knew no men. Isolated from them all her life, in school and in the community where she lived as a nonmember, she knew only the men of her own family and perhaps some of their friends. Even if, freakishly, she did know a few others and had a certain one in mind, tagging him could be none of her doing. Selecting a husband was the province of her parents. The farthest she could go in promoting her own candidate was to induce her parents to let the fellow come to the house and have a look at him. If the parents then vetoed him, and the daughter was still bound to have him, she must wait until she was twenty-five before she could proceed. A son in the reverse situation had to stall until he was thirty.

But, since the daughter usually had no one in mind, the common practice when she reached marriage age was for her parents to see what the market offered. They solicited friends and relatives to keep an eye out, turning in photographs of available timber. Then the daughter sifted these through the screen of her preference. Sometimes there would be up to fifty pictures. When the winner was finally picked, private detectives usually went into action for both families, covertly inquiring into the personal habits of each principal, such as the frequency of bathing, food tastes and volume of intake, cigarette consumption, etc.

The investigation settled to everyone's satisfaction, there followed a minimum period of six months in which to get further acquainted, always in the presence of a chaperon. Once the marriage took place, the burden of preserving it rested solely on the wife, and under no circumstances could she herself break it off. If there was a divorce, the wife was expected not to try again, or, at the very most, only once. Her course was to return to her parents and lose herself in memory-effacing work.

Besides having no rights in the domesticity which she chose in preference to a career, the wife owned nothing, not even the kimono on her

(Continued on page 60)

FRITZ HENLE PHOTOS FROM MONKMEYER

Under MacArthur, liberated Japanese women attend English classes like this one, learning what they must do in order to complete their emancipation.

Mr. and Mrs. Hartwell map out an ideal cross-country trip.

The Mrs. (Writer Ruth Adams Knight) packed only essential

If You Hit the Road

BY DICKSON HARTWELL

Thinking of taking out the jaloppy for a long spin on the highways? A report on road, restaurant, rest-room, and other conditions by a man who drove 10,000 miles—and isn't home yet

A REAL pioneer these days is a man who packs the wife and kiddies into the family automobile and heads out beyond the city limits into the great unknown. Ahead of him is the almost certain prospect of no place to sleep, of long periods of hunger, and of hazardous miles on tires momentarily ready to succumb.

But even these difficulties are not enough, apparently, to diminish the American enthusiasm for auto travel. If the experts read the signs correctly, several million American families are going some place by car during the next few months. Their spirit is commendable and in the national tradition, but what they are up against would make appropriate the award of a medal by some outfit like the National Geographic Society for the most courageous motoring achievement of 1946.

I should like to qualify for that medal. Last January 1, my wife and I set forth from our Connecticut home to discover how auto travel differs from 1941. After 10,000 miles (I haven't got back yet) I've found out—with a bang. The bang, unfortunately, was my right front tire.

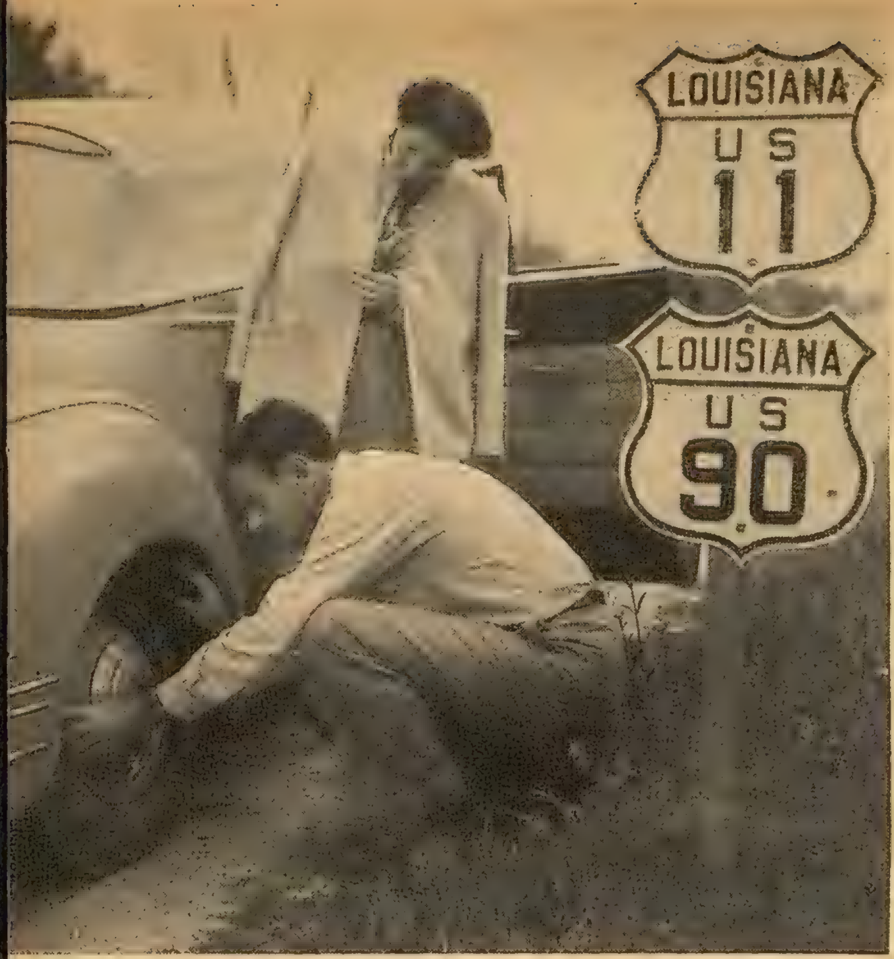
Along the Southern highways last winter I found tourist travel was as heavy as before the war. And down Florida way, roads were loaded with people looking for a place to stay. In some communities there wasn't even vacant space to park a trailer. Traffic in southern California had never been heavier. At state agricultural inspection stations along the Arizona border, as many as twenty or thirty cars were lined up waiting for the entry permits California requires. As one inspector said, "It's like the old days already and summer is still to come."

The operator of a small-town gas station in New Mexico told me that where he used to sell 5,000 gallons a month he was now pumping 1,000 a day and expecting to double that at the season's height.

Tourist agencies frankly admit that the heavy winter and spring traffic was merely a prelude to what is to come when the summer migration gets under way. It has been five years now since families have enjoyed the traditional American vacation-on-wheels. They know their tires are weak and all about the inconveniences, so they think. They know, too, of the warnings to hold down travel issued by various auto clubs and chambers of commerce. But if any of these disquieting forecasts stops anybody who can do so from making a motor trip, I miss my guess. We've got left only enough petroleum reserves for fourteen more years, the geologists tell us. We'd better enjoy the old bus while we can.

Meanwhile, estimates as to how long it will be before auto travel conditions return to normal vary widely, but the most reliable people I've talked with say it will take another six months at least and perhaps as much as a year. And it may be a lot longer than that before you can stop at a hotel and get a room without an advance reservation.

Naturally the conscientious innkeepers are making an effort to give service, but in all but the very high-priced places it is pretty ineffectual.



Cautious tourists check aging tires about every fifty miles.

Unless you find lodgings by mid-afternoon, you sleep in the car.

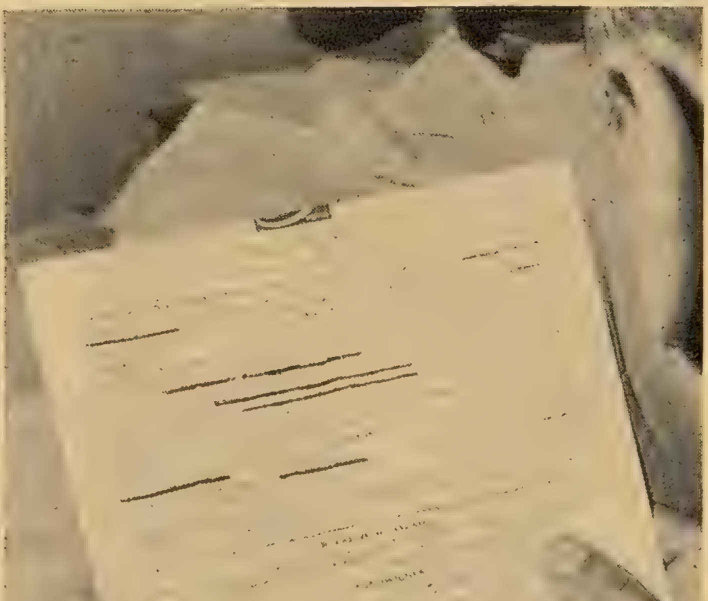
Even a pretense at service is still lacking. This is true of garages, always notoriously independent (and rapacious in their charges), and restaurants. It is rapidly becoming less true of filling stations, where courtesy is traditional.

Remember the summer of 1941 when travel by car was wonderful? Plenty of everything except that delicious beer from Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. Plenty of gasoline; batteries that would last longer than six months; restaurants with as many waitresses as patrons, almost, who served the food that was listed on the menu; tires for sale at every gas station; motor courts with accommodations available as late as 6 P.M.; prompt service in garages. And that blessed American institution, *clean* rest rooms.

It isn't like that today. The gasoline is back, of course, but I've already replaced the new battery I bought before starting this trip. You don't starve, to be sure, but you can get plenty hungry fingering a glass of water for an hour and a half while waiting to be served. Tires—the roads are strewn with rubber carcasses—black counterparts of the whitened bones of oxen along a covered-wagon trail. Motor courts galore, but with reservations booked as much as six weeks in advance. As for rest rooms, I'll take the outhouse latrines I used on Saipan.

But the highways are there and there's fun over the horizon, maybe. So get out the road maps—the 1941 editions because you can't get free new ones yet—follow the red and blue lines to adventure. But whether you go 500 miles or 5,000, there are several things to do before you start. To ignore them is asking for trouble, and trouble is the one thing you will find available without the asking.

To begin with, join the auto club. Not only does the club supply maps and touring information, but it provides an invaluable list of the better places to spend the night in practically every city and town in the country. In addition, the club provides emergency road service to members in any part of the United States. The ten or fifteen dollars annual dues pays for itself quickly in peace of mind alone.



BRADLEY SMITH PHOTOS

Always, desirable dishes were inked off the menu.

And make reservations, for this is one trip you have to plot out in advance. Figure out how many miles you can drive each day comfortably. Then write, wire, or telephone to a hotel or motor court in each city where you intend to stop and get a confirmed reservation for the date you expect to be there.

This is vital. We got ahead of schedule once on this trip and decided to drive on much farther, canceling a reservation we had made. It wasn't long before our folly became apparent. We drove 200 miles, trying at every town to find a place to sleep. Luckily we found a huge resort hotel with vacancies because it was a week ahead of season. Your reservations are so important that, if necessary, send a check and pay in advance, as unpaid reservations are seldom held after 6 P.M.

And be sure to take along sufficient money. It costs more when you travel now. Here, for example, is a comparison taken from my records of costs for two people for a day, five years ago and today:

	1941	1946
Breakfast	$ .90	$ 2.00
Room	3.00	6.00
Lunch	.85	1.50
Dinner	2.85	3.70
Gas and oil	5.75	6.85
Garage		.50
Tips		1.00
	$13.35	$21.55

It works out to a difference of around two cents a mile for

(*Continued on page 80*)

PLEASE
DO NOT
HANDLE!!

This man, once a restaurateur, grew interested in auctions and became a small-time New York dealer, bidding as Mr. X. He's examining the glaze on some 17th-Century china worth $500.

An auction is as exciting as a horse race, and those who know the ins and outs usually get what they want

Going! Going! GONE!

By ROBERT T. FURMAN, Jr.

MORE people than ever are going to auctions and they're paying prices that make even the auctioneers' eyes pop. It's a seller's market in the "Going! Going! Gone!" business. People have lots of money to spend and there are not enough pictures, chairs, vases, and knickknacks to bid on.

It's the more expensive items that are having the biggest boom. Paintings, antique furniture of all kinds, fine porcelains, silver, and the like, are all being bid in at new highs. Ordinary household furniture and effects have had a more modest rise, and in this field there is much the same opportunity as there always was for buyers to save money on hundreds of used-but-useful things.

It is at the "household effects" auctions in the large cities, and to some extent in rural areas, that the treasures of gracious old homes are being scattered to the four corners of small apartments, antique shops, and secondhand stores. Changing conditions and the passing years are responsible for breaking up many of America's large living establishments.

Whatever the reason for the sale, auctioning serves a useful purpose for both buyers and sellers. To owners it brings cash for things no longer useful to them. To buyers it offers an opportunity to furnish a home, find odd pieces, or indulge a hobby, usually at below store prices.

Many people go to auctions because they enjoy the show. They revel in the heady wine of rapid-fire bids, the changing cast of characters, and the display of effects, some of which "might just fit in" to their own homes. One auctioneer in downtown New York can rattle off a list of notables who attend his Saturday-afternoon matinees regularly: Jo Davidson, the sculptor; Helen Hayes, when she's not working; Emanuel List of the Metropolitan Opera, and many more. There's always a good performance and admittance is free.

There are others who go primarily to indulge their gambling instinct on such long shots as finding an old master hidden behind a dusty canvas, or an original Hepplewhite under the peeling paint of a battered sideboard. For them, an auction is more exciting than a horse race or bingo, and often much more expensive.

But the majority of people go because they believe that the "bid and buy" system may save them money on the purchase of something they really need. This point of view is perfectly sound and practical, even in this day of high prices, provided the buyer learns the ropes—and inoculates himself beforehand against "auction fever."

Auction fever is highly contagious. It can reach the crisis stage in a matter of minutes when the victim is surrounded by potential bargains and exposed to a crowd of bidding enthusiasts. The usual symptoms are extreme nervousness, fear of losing something the victim doesn't really want, and a dry throat which irresistibly keeps uttering higher and higher bids in a strange, tense voice. Serious depression and lack of cash usually follow after the auction.

Another form of auction fever is brought on by what psychologists would call "the will to win." That's when the bidding becomes a struggle of nerves and pocketbooks, with the winner always a sure loser.

Ashbel Green, Jr., auctioneer at Silo's in New York, tells the story of a well-to-do lady of eighty-odd who for years sat in the front row at the auctions. She flourished an ear trumpet, obviously enjoying every minute of the sale. One afternoon she worked herself into a bidding battle with another well-financed matriarch, and together they bid a crystal clock, which cost $235 new at Cartier's, up to $485. One hundred and fifty dollars would have been a fair price, but that wasn't the point. The ear-trumpet-wielding grande dame was out to defeat her adversary and felt pretty proud of herself when she won, in spite of the fact that she overpaid by more than $300. This practice isn't recommended for thrills, not even by the auctioneers.

But if an auction trotter will keep his temperature down, auctions can be profitable; profitable in the sense of making it possible to buy usable things at low cost, not in the sense of making thousands of dollars on a "find." It's true that now and then valuable pieces do sell for a pittance. An original Franz Hals sold recently for $10. The owner has since been offered $10,000 for it. But such cases are rare in these days of experts. It's more practical to try to hit the jackpot in a slot machine.

WHAT can you expect to find at a general auction? Anything and everything from antique masterpieces to kitchen tables, from monstrosities of nineteenth-century taste to exquisite bibelots of every description. If it's been in a house it will probably come up at auction some time or other. Auction sales bear out the contention that "the bigger they are the harder they fall"—the larger and more expensive the mansion, the more likely its contents will sometime be sold at auction.

The contents of the palatial home of Herman Oelrichs in Newport, Rhode Island, brought $67,500. The house itself was sold at the same sale for only $15,000. It was bought, incidentally, by Gertrude Niesen, the musical-comedy star, who reaped considerable valuable publicity as a result and later sold the estate for a neat profit. The furnishings of Charles M. Schwab of Bethlehem Steel brought more than $100,000, even after relatives had taken the best of the items. Automobile manufacturer John Willys' estate, which included jewelry and books, sold only last fall for $750,000.

Here's an inveterate auction-goer who remained motionless until linens went on sale, then bid with a mandatory wave of her cane. The auctioneer uses a mike.

Auction prices can be high and the merchandise worth every penny of it: $100 each for serving plates once presented by Princess Murat to the Emperor Napoleon; $1,200 for an original Hepplewhite sideboard; $750 for a Gorham sterling-silver coffee service. Or prices can be low: $14 for a usable upholstered chair; $3 for a good plate-glass mirror; $25 for an old brassbound chest. Actually it's a question of what you need. You can find just about anything if you keep your eyes open.

In addition to the diversified offerings there are many special sales which are the mecca of collectors as well as dealers. These may include anything from antique paperweights to ancient armor. In fact, the sale of armor from the Ferdinand Keller collection a few years ago was an important event. Top price for a suit of armor in good condition was about $4,500.

PHOTOS BY MARJORY COLLINS

The auction started at noon. Rather than risk losing her precious linens by going out to luncheon, she contented herself with a milk shake brought in by her chauffeur.

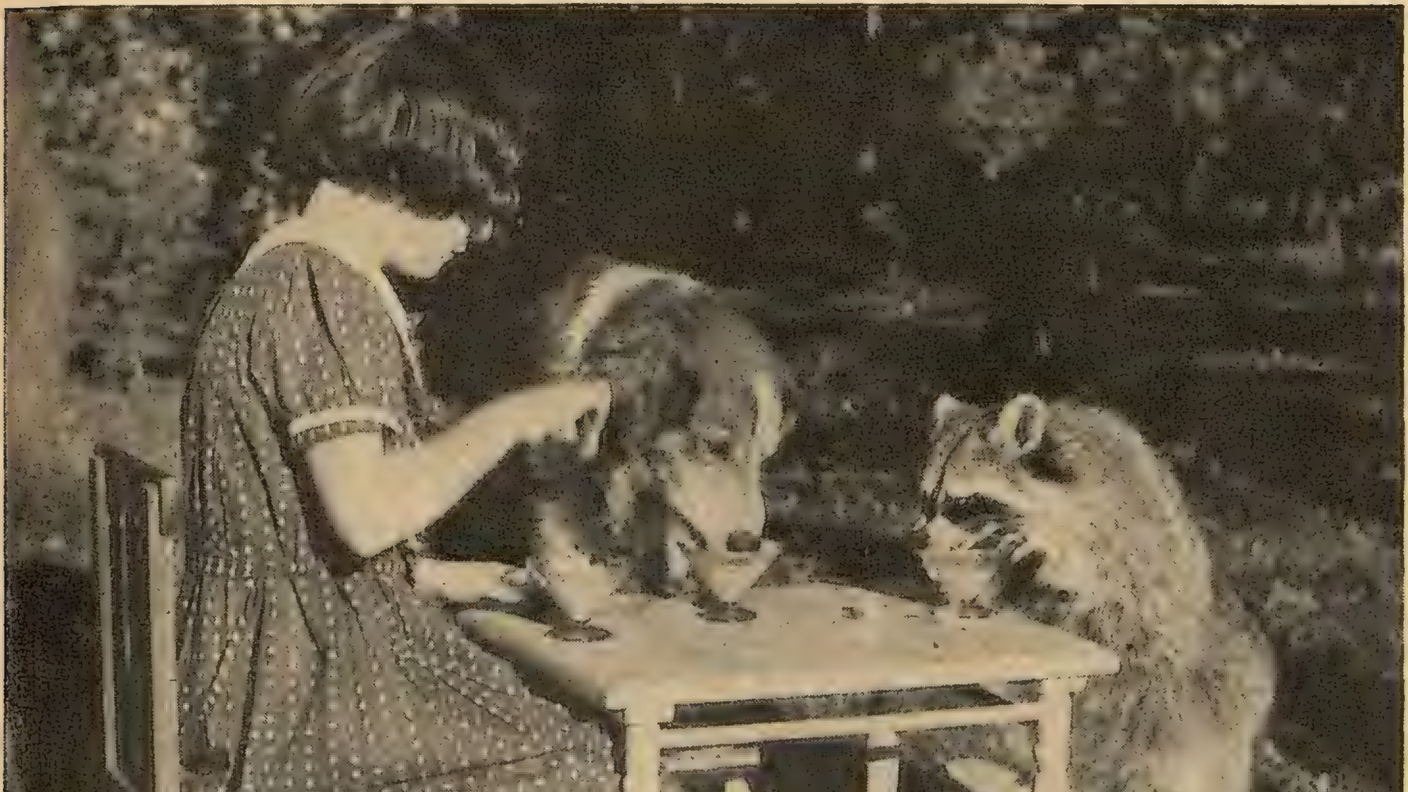
PAINTINGS are the most popular special sale item, and today canvases are bringing fabulous prices. One well-informed auctioneer says it's because many wealthy refugees are investing in paintings in the belief that they can resell them abroad at higher prices when conditions stabilize. This is borne out to some extent by the fact that art is now bringing even more in London than it is here. New York's Parke-Bernet Galleries is the high temple of sale for painting and other art objects. Here, in a plush, almost reverent atmosphere, prices are placed on priceless art treasures of all kinds, paintings, furniture, jewelry, books, by buyers from all over the world. It is not unusual for $200,000 worth of art to change hands at Parke-Bernet in an afternoon.

At the other end of the scale from Parke-Bernet are the country auctions where a buyer may bid on anything from a milking stool to a mowing machine. These sales are

(*Continued on page 68*)

The Camera Eye

Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing

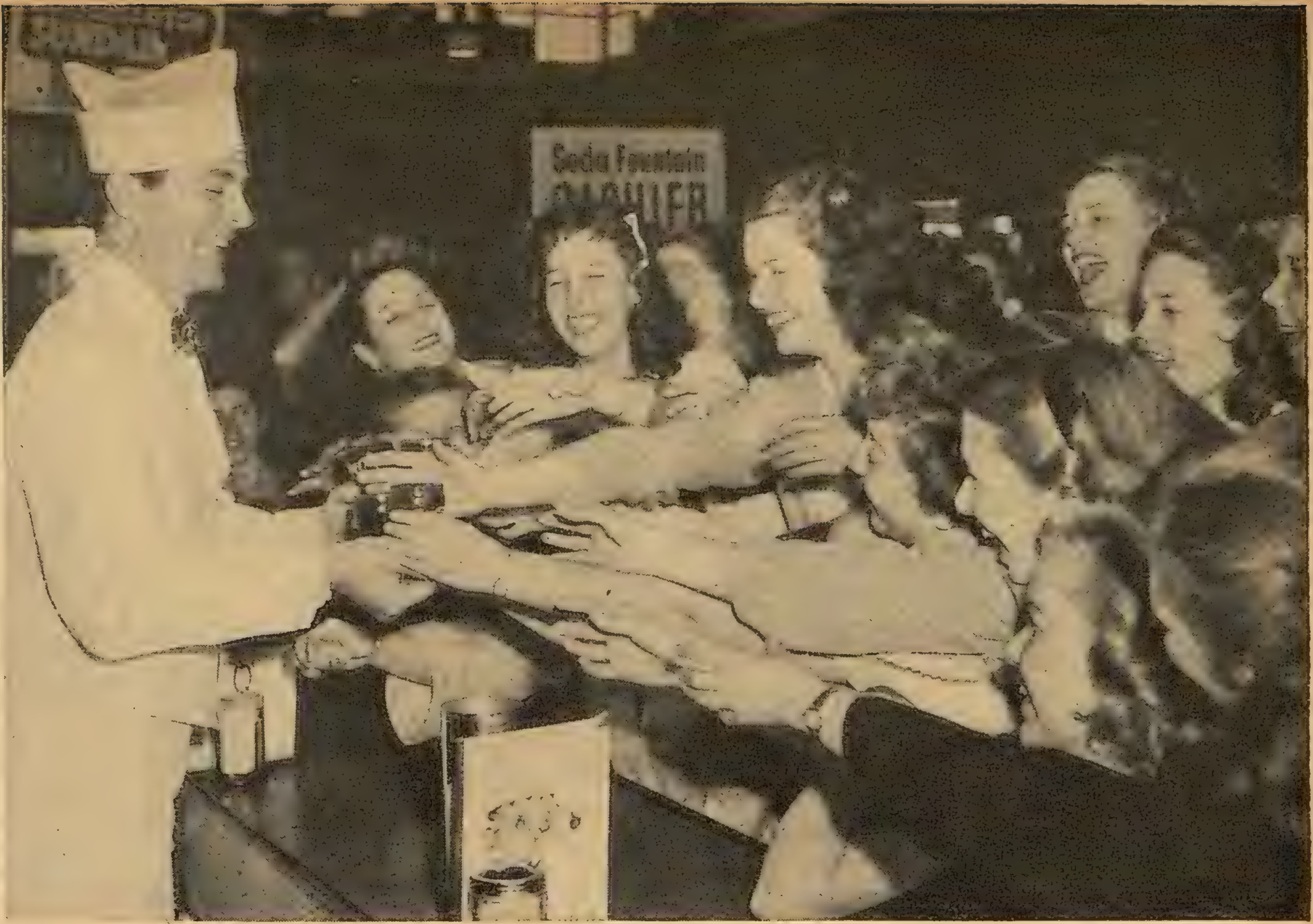


THEY'LL TAKE VANILLA—Hostess Claire Shorrock of New Bedford, Mass., raised the raccoon from infancy. Now even the collie accepts him. On ice cream the coon uses the paws that refresh.

LYNWOOD M. CHACE

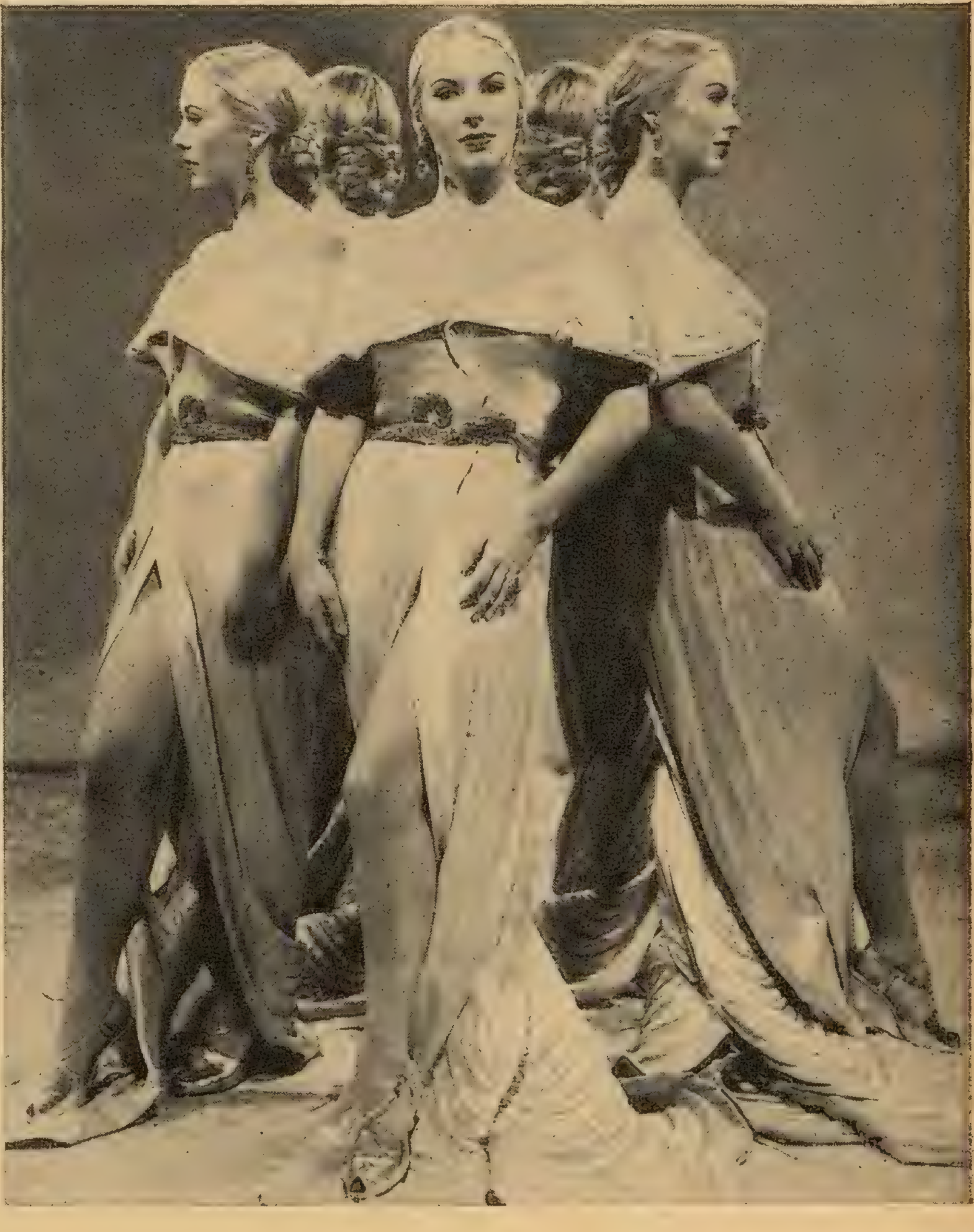
**OAST - TO - COAST
ATER** — Scott Smart
is the title role in The
it Man, Dashiell Ham-
ett's radio show. He
unches throughout
hearsals, and some-
mes nibbles during
e broadcast. The
mished-looking lady
-Amzie Strickland.

ALES APPEAL —
ana Andrews of the
ovies provoked this
islaught by taking a
da jerker's job in
ollywood. He did it
train for a forth-
ming role, but from
pearances here, he
ay not live so long.
INTERNATIONAL



WONDER WHAT HE WOULD TAKE — Each spring, Boni Corrado, Chicago odd-jobs man, builds himself a home like this on a vacant lot. This year he may have to stand off quite a horde of would-be purchasers.
ACME

FIVE OF A KIND—You could call this a girl beside herself, but she and the shot are too well composed. She's Andrea King of cinema fame, photographed with the artful help of mirrors.
INTERNATIONAL



The Bride Comes Home

Like her forebears of long ago, a British girl follows her heart to Missouri—and finds a home

LIKE thousands of other American soldiers, Captain Jim Brink of Kansas City, Kansas, married an English girl during his tour of duty in Britain. They got an apartment in a Channel coast town, and life became as good as it could ever get for a fighter pilot in wartime.

Seventeen months ago Captain Brink's 137 sorties against the enemy added up to a thirty-day furlough at home. While home, his orders were changed and he never did get back to his bride. He entreated the authorities all the way up to President Truman, but nothing could clear a passage to the States for his wife and their small son John Robert, born a year ago.

Brink was discharged last September and, still impatient and unhappy, went to work for an aircraft firm. This year his sweating-out period ended. His little family's number had finally come up, and they sailed for America on the Queen Mary. No thrill will ever exceed the moment when they were reunited. Home was a seven-room house near Parkville, Missouri, which Captain Brink had bought for his family and frantically worked into apple-pie order. Here are pictures of the preparations for the great day—a delightfully commonplace event in thousands of American towns today.

The Camera Eye

A little abashed, Brink shops for gifts for his British bride. "Will she go for all that fluff?" he asks a friend.

Brink and his mother, Dr. Minerva Brink, unwrap some of the gifts that await Enid and young John, age one.

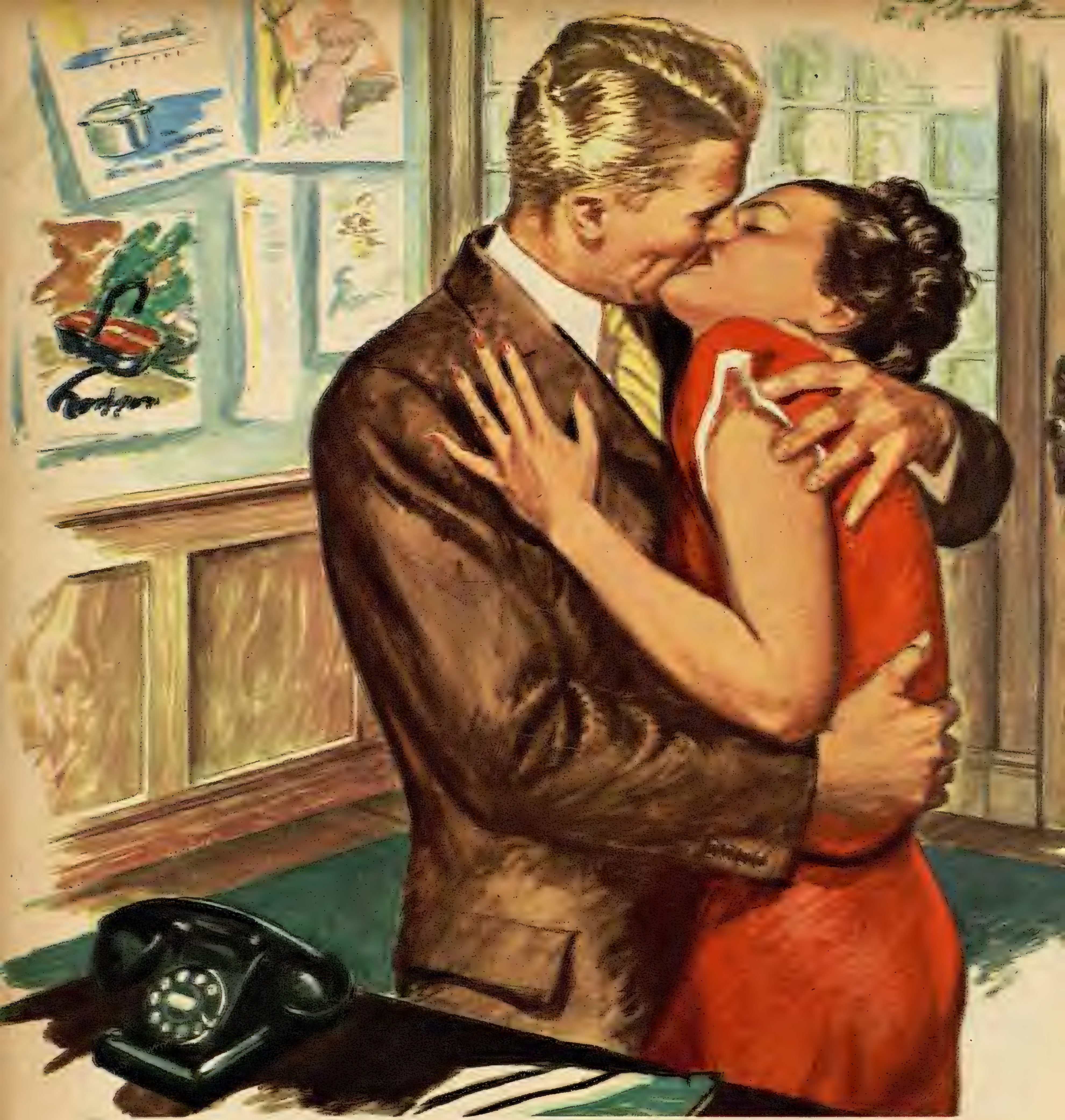
No dust will mar Enid's first view of her new home in Parkville, Missouri—not if elbow grease can prevent it.

The big moment! Jim can't take his eyes off that son he has never seen before. Grandma's pretty proud, too.

First bedtime story in a new land. Young John's chief impression of America: a place full of toothsome candy.

ACME PHOTOS

Enid had never seen a cow, so Jim shows her the family heifer. The place is beginning to seem like home, and all is well.



The next thing I knew Charlie was standing in the middle of the room kissing me. Just like the movies. Boss and secretary.

THE boss was sitting in his office eating peanuts. Although I could have yelled at him easier than not, I decided to be formal. I gave our interoffice telephone button a vicious jab and told him Miss Warren was on the wire. Baked Alaska wouldn't have melted in his mouth. He told me to put her on in a minute and closed the door that said Charles Barnes, vice-president. I was getting ready to finish a chocolate bar and listen in when Miss Warren said, "That's all, thank you, Meredith. We don't need a stenographic record of what we say."

I hung up and reflected that a secretary's lot is paved with insults. The difference between the lowest copywriter and the highest-paid secretary in an advertising agency couldn't be spanned by a B-29 in two years. I was hired at Johnson & Thomas as a kind of junior-junior-junior assistant, cleaning out files and emptying wastebaskets. But one day they discovered I could type and take dictation. That ended my childish dreams of becoming a writer. Even when Charlie came to work for us as the creative copy genius and they let me be his secretary, it didn't help. All I had time to do was run around after him, picking up peanut shells.

Pretty soon Charlie came out grinning like Mortimer Snerd. "Meredith," he said, "I told Miss Warren we'd help her out a little."

For despairing secretaries who want to hook the boss, Meredith is someone to watch

BY ISABELLA TAVES

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

The Woman's Angle

We, in that case, meant me. Helen Warren is our female-appeal copywriter. Like all the rest of the writers, she had no regular secretary. But she was always getting in a jam and having to dictate whole campaigns at the last minute and borrowing somebody else's secretary to do it. I had never been one of her victims because, after all, Charlie was head of the creative department and her boss. But Helen and Charlie had been having an awful lot of private conferences lately, conferences that naturally seemed to go into lunch or cocktails.

"I'm terribly busy," I said. "I don't see how—"

Charlie sat on the edge of my desk. "Now, Meredith, don't be a trout. It's just this afternoon. I'm going out anyhow."

"What do you think I do when you're out—knit doilies? When you aren't here, I can catch up on my work."

Charlie grinned. He is no dream prince, but he has a nice grin. It makes your spine wiggle. "Honey, she'll never get that electrical-equipment campaign done if you don't help. Please be a good girl. I'll buy you a box of candy."

I sniffed. "I like candy bars better."

"Then I'll buy you a gross of candy bars. Why you don't get fat eating them as you do, I'd like to know."

"You sound just like my mother. Skip it. I'll go quietly. When does she want me?"

"After lunch. Have yourself a good one and put it on the expense account. I'll deliver Miss Warren to her office by two thirty."

I WENT out and bought a box of peanut-butter crackers and some chocolate peppermints and went to see Gary Cooper. He was so divine I couldn't bear to leave before the final clinch, so it was nearly two forty-five before I wandered into Helen Warren's office.

It was really just one of the usual copywriter cells, but she had it fixed up with growing plants and modern pictures and a shocking-pink bulletin board. It was the same feminine approach she used so lavishly in all her business contacts. I gave her a good solid look.

She was wearing a black suit so simple that it must have cost a couple of hundred dollars. On her head was a black hat with a pale blue dove on top. A real dove, it looked like. It was strictly offensive but chic—you know, the kind of hat you wear so that men will tease you about it. The effect was terrific. But if you bothered to undress Helen Warren mentally, you had just another thin, rather anemic blonde.

"Hello," she said, glancing at her watch. "Let's get going."

Just like that, big executive. That's what I hate about women. Give them a chance at a secretary and they act as if they were president of Standard Oil.

She pushed her typewriter toward me. "Now, to save time, I'll dictate directly to you on the typewriter, so you won't have to stay tonight and transcribe notes. I don't want to make you work overtime."

"Thanks," I said.

I HAD never seen Miss Warren really at work before and I was naturally curious. Well, it was quite a show. The problem was an advertising campaign for a new client, a manufacturer of electrical appliances. Miss Warren's job was to dream up an angle for the campaign and some copy to go in the advertising. An important job, I grant you. But Helen prepared for it as though she were rewriting Thomas Wolfe in limerick. She walked the floor. She pulled sheafs of papers out of her desk drawer and pawed through them. She dictated in a voice which could have been heard out on Nicollet Avenue. What we had, when she finished, was one of those campaigns which other copywriters would do tailspins about but which would only make a housewife mad. I know; Mom doesn't have help and on Saturday and Sunday I'm a housewife. The ads were all about what a true executive the modern housewife is, because all she has to do is push buttons. That's all very well in theory, but what about housewives like Mom who can't go out and buy a whole electrical kitchen in one swoop?

I decided that it was none of my business and probably I would never make a copywriter anyway because I had the practical kitchen philosophy. So I clipped the original and carbons together and handed the batch to her. She leaned back and lighted a cigarette.

"Why, that's fine, Meredith," she said with an unflattering air of surprise. "We work well together. Some girls—frankly, Meredith, some secretaries around here just don't seem to understand the simplest instructions. But I suppose that's why they are secretaries."

MY spine stiffened and my back hair must have stood out far enough for even her to notice.

"Meredith, nothing personal, darling. Charlie told me the other day that you want to be a copywriter, that you went to the University of Minnesota."

Her tone indicated that she had always figured me as a graduate of the Quick Commercial Seminary. I stood up. But she put out a hand.

"Wait, I have a lovely idea. How would you like to be my assistant? You could work with me, as you did today, and learn about the business, and then maybe some day—"

"No, thanks," I said. "I'm Charlie's secretary."

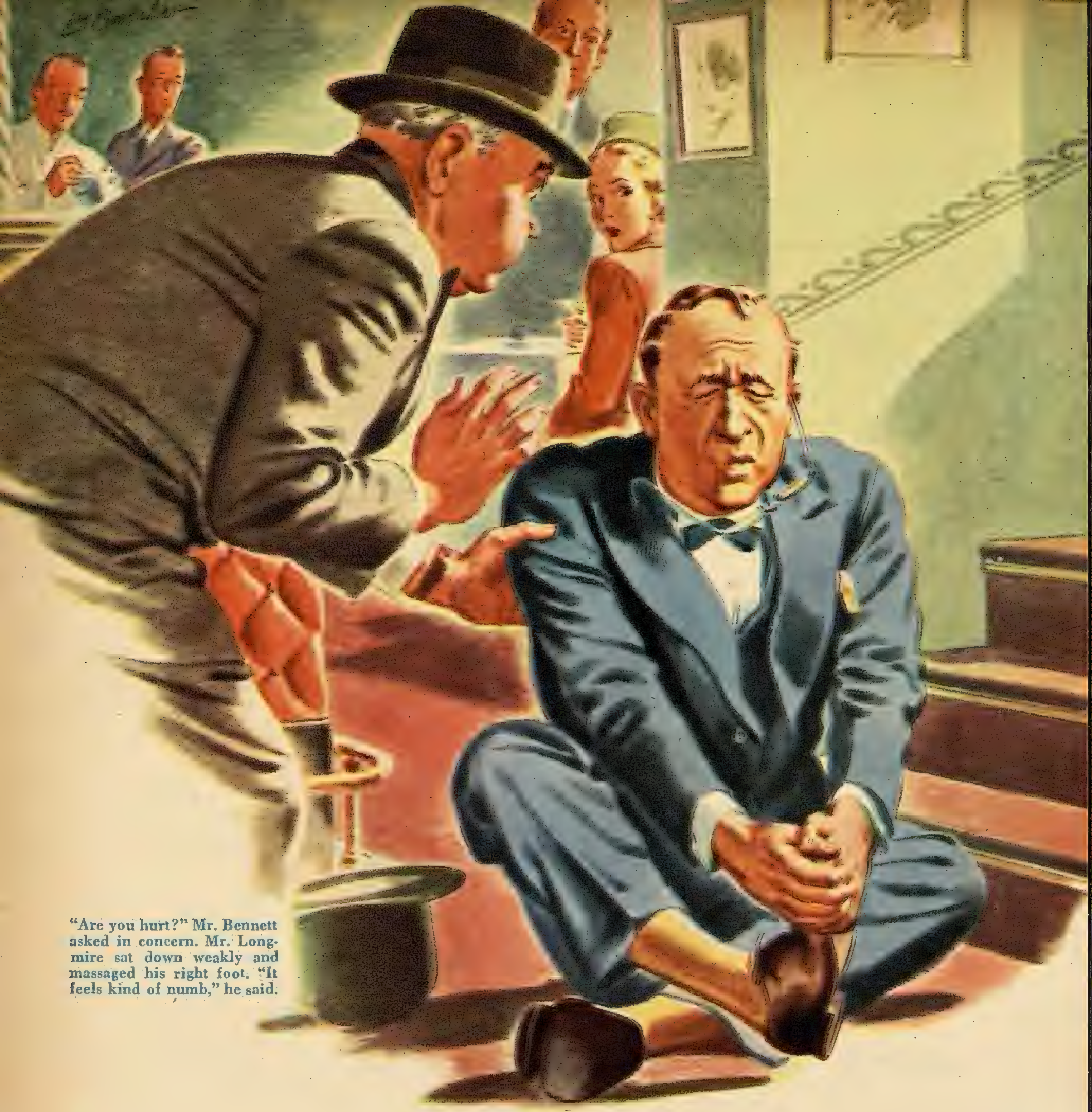
"But this is an opportunity. Charlie wouldn't stand in your way."

I felt exactly like a small furry animal of the woods caught in a trap. I could see long years stretching ahead of me when Helen would be trotting out to cocktail parties and I would be doing her dirty work. The worst part, Charlie would think he was doing me a favor.

"No," I said feebly. "No, you see —" Suddenly I had an inspiration. I lied: "You see, there wouldn't be any point in training me. I'm going to be married one of these days."

"That's all right. Johnson and Thomas don't object to hiring married women."

(*Continued on page 71*)



"Are you hurt?" Mr. Bennett asked in concern. Mr. Longmire sat down weakly and massaged his right foot. "It feels kind of numb," he said.

EDWARD G. LONGMIRE, author of some note, went to lunch one day with an editor friend—a plump, jolly gentleman by the name of Bennett—at a restaurant on Forty-sixth Street which was renowned more for the number of editors, authors, and agents that lunched there than for the quality of its food. During the three hours it took to consume four Manhattans, a shrimp cocktail, an order of spaghetti and meat balls, and three cups of coffee apiece, Mr. Longmire and Mr. Bennett amiably discussed Russo-American relations, the outrageous scarcity of good Scotch, and the morals—if any—of a young lady novelist whom they both knew. Once, they even mentioned the serial which Mr. Longmire had contracted to write for Mr. Bennett's magazine, and which they had lunched together to discuss.

Promptly at 3.30 P.M., Mr. Bennett said that he must be getting back to his office. Mr. Longmire found his legs stiffened by sitting so long, but he managed to make his way among the crowded maze of tables until he reached the three steps leading up to the street door. Being a trifle nearsighted, he stubbed his toe on the top step and fell flat on his face.

Mr. Bennett and Nick Nicoletti, owner of the restaurant, solicitously helped him up.

"Are you hurt?" Mr. Bennett asked in concern.

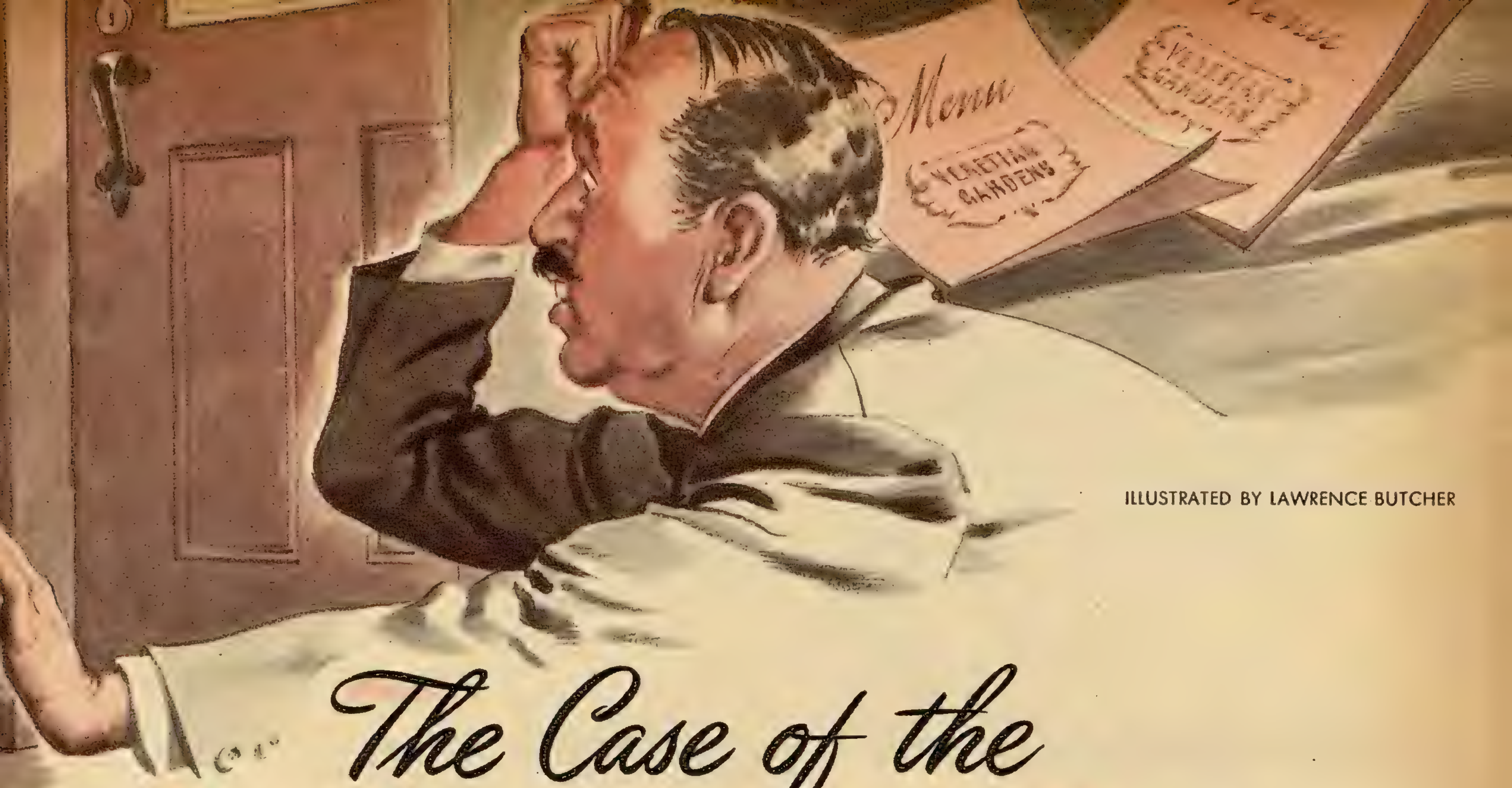
"Those-a steps!" Nick exclaimed. "Always people got to fall over them!"

Mr. Longmire sat down weakly and massaged his right foot. "It feels kind of numb," he said.

"Hell of a place to put steps," Mr. Bennett said indignantly. "You might have broken a leg."

The thought made Mr. Longmire somewhat ill. "I—I could do with a drink," he murmured.

Nick got him a double whisky. After a while Mr. Longmire was



ILLUSTRATED BY LAWRENCE BUTCHER

The Case of the Psychoneurotic Toe

A valuable addition to the current crop of psychiatric literature—only, in this one, it's the reader who nearly goes crazy

BY BILL GULICK

able to navigate under his own power into a taxi. Mr. Bennett rode with him as far as his office, then bade him good-by, admonishing him to take good care of his injured foot.

"Never can tell how serious an accident like that may be. If I were you, I'd see a doctor. And send Nick the bill. After all, if you had hurt yourself badly, you could sue him for all he's worth."

FOR a week or two after the accident Mr. Longmire's right big toe ached and was somewhat swollen. Then the soreness and swelling gradually disappeared, leaving only a slight stiffness in the toe's first joint. This, too, vanished in time, until at the end of two months the toe—to a casual observer at least—was just as good as ever.

But deep in his heart Mr. Longmire knew that the toe was not what it had been before the accident. Some indefinable workability of the appendage had departed, never to return. He soaked it in hot salt water, he massaged it tenderly, he gave it scientific ultraviolet-ray treatments—all to no avail. As a last measure, he consulted a chiropodist.

"It's in the joint," the learned man informed him after a careful examination. "There is nothing I can do."

Mr. Longmire was not sure just what was in the joint, but he realized that whatever it was, it was there to stay.

He did not mean to brood on the matter, but as the days passed he could not keep his thoughts off the toe. Sometimes when at work he would suddenly drop hero and heroine in the middle of an unresolved love scene, wrinkle his forehead in a frown, and sit, experimentally wiggling the toe. On one occasion, when his mind became a bit fogged by too many drinks before dinner, he somewhat embarrassed his hostess by removing his shoe and sock, blinking solemnly at the toe, and muttering to the room at large, "It's in the joint."

All this annoyed him no end. How could he concentrate on writing when his attention was continually wandering to his right big toe?

One morning the mail brought a bill from the chiropodist he had consulted, itemized as follows: "To examine one pedal appendage—$23.75."

Remembering the advice Mr. Bennett had given him on the day of the accident, Mr. Longmire promptly mailed the bill to Nick Nicoletti. Two days later he answered the telephone to hear Nick's puzzled voice.

"Why," asked the restaurant owner, "do you send me this-a bill?"

Mr. Longmire coolly reminded Nick of the injury he had received in his restaurant.

"Those-a steps!" Nick exclaimed.

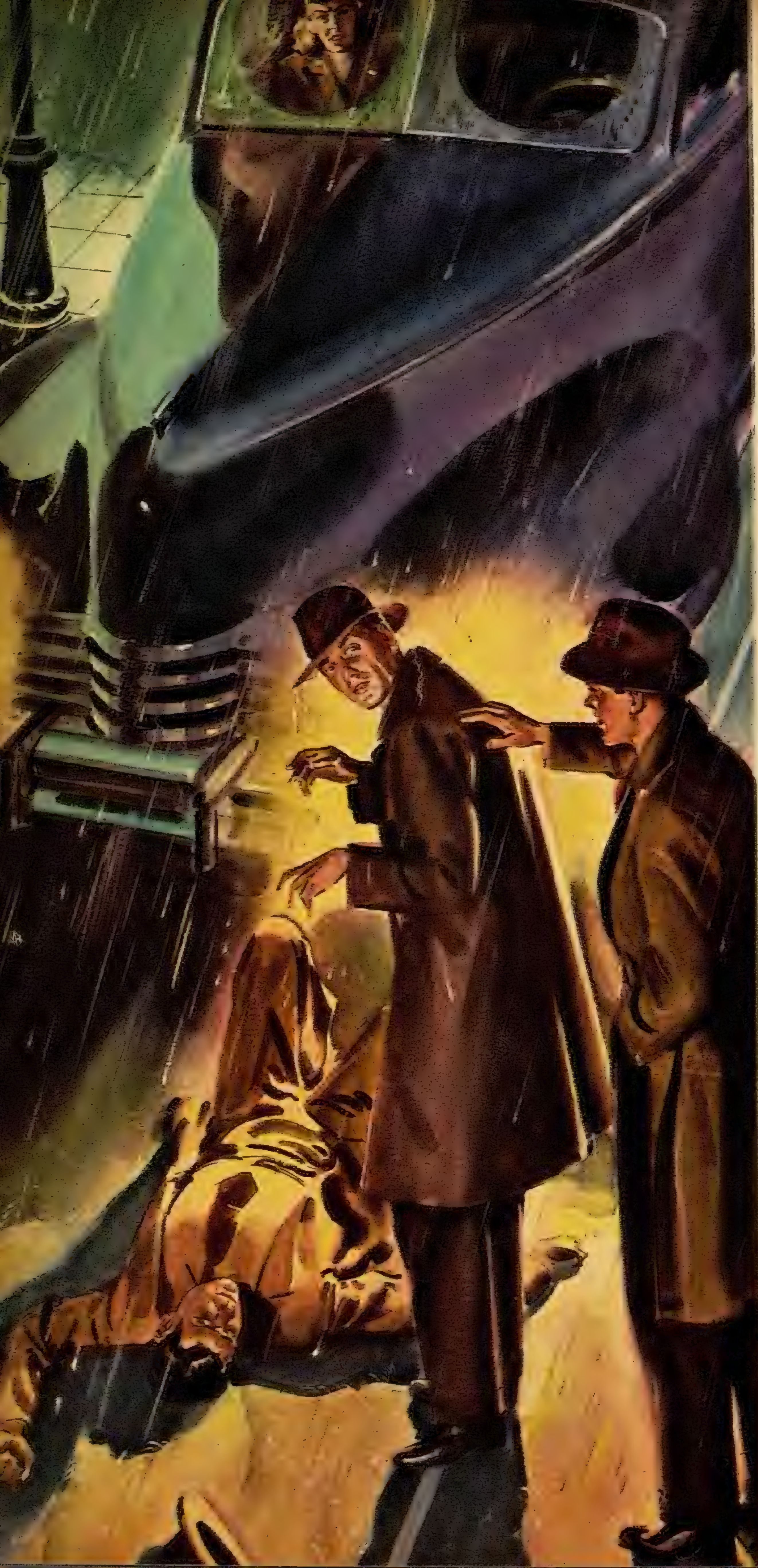
"Exactly," Mr. Longmire said. "That's why I think you should pay the bill."

"But it was your foot you hurt, not your pedal whatever this is."

Mr. Longmire explained that "pedal appendage" was a $23.75 expression meaning toe. There was a brief silence, then Nick said contritely, "Of course I will pay the bill. I have—what you call it?—liability insurance for just such matters. We will forget it ever happened, no?"

Mr. Longmire was pleased that Nick should take such a reasonable view of the matter. He found himself able to concentrate for the first

(*Continued on page 56*)



Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

BY
PETER PACKER

ILLUSTRATED BY GLENN THOMAS

FROM almost the first time she danced with me back in '43 at that canteen in Brooklyn, Janie showed me that she cared. She showed it by building me up in her own mind bigger than I am. Sure I liked it. Who wouldn't? There I was, just one of six million guys all wearing the same uniform and looking like so many stalks in a cornfield, but to Janie I stood out in that field like a—well, like a maple tree.

I was wearing the same wings as all the other pilots in the group, but to Janie they were special, because I was wearing them. The P-38 I'd been trained to fly was no run-of-the-mill Lightning in Janie's eyes. It was a golden eagle because I was flying it.

And I liked it. I was on my way over then—I didn't think I'd be coming back—and having a girl go for me like that made me feel good.

I'll be honest and tell you that when I started out I wasn't in love with Janie. She was my girl, but that was only because I didn't have anyone else ever go ga-ga over me. And I'd never had anyone else who put her arms around me the way Janie did, look up at me out of big shining eyes, and tell me that she'd pray for me every minute of the time I was away.

We wrote each other a lot of letters. I stopped thinking I wouldn't come back. When you're flying combat, you don't go by statistics. You go by hunches. And my hunch was that I was coming back.

And back I came.

I came back with a lot of other guys. We all had ribbons, we all had battle stars. We had a lot of Distinguished Flying Crosses and Air Medals.

We were all heroes, they told us. But to Janie I was no ordinary hero. To her I was the five-star variety. I was the one-man army who won the war.

Once upon a time I was the big tree in the cornfield to Janie, and

"I saw it, Mac," he said. "I saw him step off the sidewalk without looking and start across the road."

Every veteran who has been tagged a hero will understand this—and maybe even some lovestruck girls will understand—why

There Are No HEROES

it made me feel good. But now I couldn't go for stuff like that. Somehow or another I'd lost my taste for the build-up.

"Look, Janie darling," I said. "Let's forget all about this hero stuff—"

She couldn't understand.

"But why, Nick? Why? Look at those ribbons! The Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with five clusters! I always knew you'd do it. You'll tell me about it, won't you?"

I was the winner—the champ. Everyone in Brooklyn who knew Janie knew that I was a hero. My ribbons proved it. It still added up to the fact that Janie was in love with me, but I wanted her to love me for different reasons.

THIS is what I told her three days later. "Janie," I said. "You know how I got that Air Medal? I was coming home from a mission—bomber escort. Someone spotted enemy troops on the highway. I got the message and went down to take a look at them. They were diving for the ditches when I saw them, so I buzzed the road with my finger on the gun button, and I saw them going over like duckpins. They didn't have a prayer—but I got an Air Medal."

"You were very brave, Nick," she said, and kissed me.

"Janie," I said, "I felt about as brave as a guy squashing the life out of ants with his heel."

She smiled and gave me another kiss.

"Janie," I said, "I'm no hero. I'm just a guy who came back. The only hero who gets a glint of heroism in his eyes when he kills somebody is a Hollywood hero. Everyone else is slightly sick and very tired."

"Nick," said Janie, "I think you're wonderful."

And it didn't make any difference to her when I took off my uniform and put on a blue serge suit. In her mind's eye she could still see the hero in the uniform with ribbons, and it got to be irritating, particularly to a civilian who was just looking for a peaceful, strictly unheroic job in a bank.

I'D have given ten years of my life if I could have stopped it from happening. But it happened all right. And now that it's over, well—I guess there was just a little bit of good to it.

It was a Saturday night, and Janie and I had tickets to a Broadway show. It had been drizzling all day. A two-degree drop in temperature and it would turn to sleet; but it stayed misty. I thought of an easy chair and a log fire, but we didn't want to miss the show, so around seven thirty we took her father's car and started for town.

We sat huddled close together, the windshield wipers beating out an Irish jig, the wide Vs of clear glass letting in wedges of the lighted street. There's a kind of insulated security about sitting in a car, snug and warm, cutting through bad weather.

You keep your eyes pretty steadily ahead when you're looking out through a wedge of glass instead of a whole windshield. I was doing just that. Ahead of me, about twenty yards, there were the twin taillights of a car, and ahead of the car there was a bus. The car was slowing a little. So was I.

At first there was nothing between us, and then out of nowhere there was the head and shoulders of a man right there in front of me—not four yards away. I could see the shape of his left ear with all its little folds and hollows lit up in the beam of my headlights, and even as I slammed the brake to the floor I knew I was going to hit him and that nothing in this wide world was going to prevent it.

There was only a little bump, as if I had gone over an uneven manhole cover, and then Janie was asking me why I had stopped the car.

I didn't answer her, but I got out and went around to the front, and the man was lying bent over the left headlight, the upper part of his body in the trough between the offside fender and the hood. Even as I stood there staring, the body began to slip down out of the trough, and then it dropped with a little plop on the wet ground.

A hand was put on my shoulder.

"I saw it, Mac," a man's voice said. "I saw him just step off the sidewalk without looking and start across the road. You're O.K. It wasn't your fault. You stay right here and I'll run across to the drugstore and call the ambulance."

Janie was standing close beside me then. I could feel her shivering.

"Better get back in the car, Janie," I said.

"No—I'll stay here," she said.

There was a policeman, and strained white faces in a narrow circle craning forward, and then there was the ambulance. When the doctor had taken a look at the man, he turned to the attendants and said, "Morgue."

THERE were more police now. They took a lot of information. Then they let us go. We got back into the car. Janie sat close beside me, crying softly.

I started the car, drove on about a hundred yards, then I parked the car, shut off the engine, and cut the lights. We sat there. Janie's head was on my shoulder. My hands were wet with her tears.

We sat there for a long time.

"It's so awful—so awful to kill a man," she said in a broken whisper. "I feel so—so sick. I—"

I held her close.

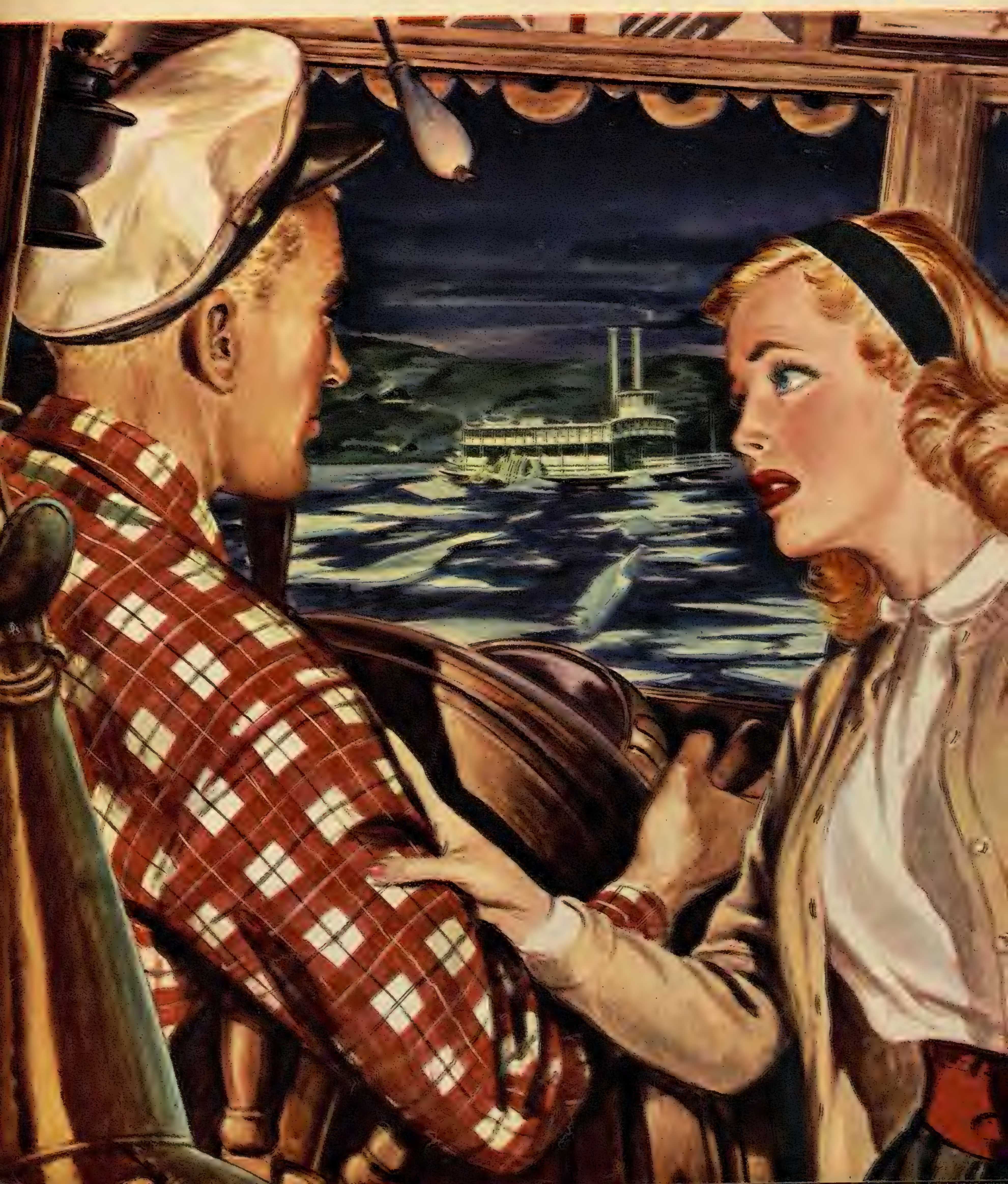
"He didn't have a prayer," I said—half to myself. "As soon as I saw him I knew he was going to die. . . . It was—it was like the time when I buzzed that road. It was the same feeling—a kind of coldness deep in your guts. There's no fun killing anyone, Janie. Never."

She turned her head and looked up at me. I guess it was just about then that she understood how I felt about the build-up.

So I never did get to tell her why they gave me a Distinguished Flying Cross. It's in the records at the Adjutant General's office if anyone wants to know. Janie doesn't. Anyway, I don't see why anyone would want to know about a thing like that. We're supposed to be through with war for good.

THE END

Ice Trap



Axel rang full ahead and steamed in pursuit of the drifting Valley Lily. "You'll only lose your steamboat, too," Jenny Sweet wailed.

It was nearly spring, Axel observed, but there was thin ice on the river and, far more dangerous, the figure of a lovely and persistent girl

BY CLIFF FARRELL

ILLUSTRATED BY THOMAS ATWELL

AXEL. P. OLSEN tried to ignore the sound of skate blades on the river ice and the voice of a girl singing as he read from a document that a public stenographer had transcribed for him.

He stood in his captain's cabin aboard the ancient steamboat Jupiter, whose rococo grandeur and gingerbread woodwork was, in this streamlined age, as distinctly individualistic as a lady wearing a bustle.

Axel had an audience of one, Baldy Rust, his ancient horse-faced engineer.

Axel read, ". . . and in return for the aforesaid fare of twenty-seven dollars per person, party of the first part—meaning yours truly—guarantees to maintain the highest standards of cuisine, courtesy, and interest in the welfare of all guests in keeping with the reputation of Midwestern Travel Service, Inc. And . . ."

Axel's mind wandered. That girl could sing too, he reflected cynically. She's got a movie-star name and a personality and a shape. So she's going to run me off the river, is she? Ha!

". . . and party of first part," Axel resumed, "will make available to each guest consigned by Midwestern Travel Service Inc., the following items of entertainment, to wit: one two-hour tour of the scene of pioneer Indian massacre at Big Bottoms and other points of historical interest, one guide-conducted tour of scenic Crystal Springs cave, one grand ball, featuring old-time dances and music of Southern string orchestra, one . . ."

Axel's mind was drifting again. He said vehemently, "Blast that girl!"

He glared through the window. It was spring all right. Spring in southern Ohio. He could smell the river. Earthy and wild but clean. He could sense its rebirth beneath the lead-colored sheet of ice that lay soiled and ugly across its face, still holding firm after days of thaw.

Axel had wintered the Jupiter in the lee of the shore pier of the steel bridge, keeping the ice chopped away from her hull. Two hundred yards down the shore another packet, gleaming in a new coat of white and gilt paint, was moored back of the protection of a line of pilings. The ice had broken away from shore and both steamboats floated in a narrow lane of open water.

But what Axel mainly looked at was the girl, skating alone on the soot-darkened river ice. The ice was rough but safe enough, except toward the middle of the river where dark streaks were visible. That was where the channel current was at work.

The girl veered close to one of those rotted spots, missed the danger, and came swooping inshore. She saw Axel and pulled up within speaking distance. "Good morning, Captain Olsen," she said.

Axel said good morning.

"This likely is the last chance for skating," she said. "I just couldn't resist—"

She let it ride there. It was an invitation to join her so she could turn on the charm at close quarters. Axel wasn't falling for that again. It was dangerous. She had a way of making a man want to talk about himself and his ambitions, and do a little bragging. A loose lip might be disastrous to him now.

When she saw he wasn't going to talk, she asked, "Have you reached a decision on my offer to buy the Jupiter?"

"I'm still on the fence," Axel said. "If you could give me a little more time—"

"Of course," she agreed. "Another hour or two won't make much difference."

She skated away. "Stay near this shore," Axel called. "Thin ice in the channel."

She smiled over her shoulder. "Thanks," and headed toward the danger zone.

"That," Baldy snorted, "is to show what she thinks of your advice."

AXEL thoughtfully watched the girl. Her name was Jenny Sweet, and last July she had appeared on the scene with her packet, the Valley Lily. The Lily had been included in a modest estate left by her father, a retired Cincinnati steamboat man. The girl had rejuvenated the Lily and the previous July, had brought it up the smaller Muskingum, where the only competition was Axel and his Jupiter.

In this age of motor trucks and fast freights, two steamboats were one too many on the Muskingum, where the traffic was mainly short-haul cargo—butter, eggs, milk, and farm produce, and an occasional fee for towing barges for the government dredge.

The ancient Jupiter had not much more than paid expenses under a succession of owners before Axel acquired her at auction the previous spring. But what Axel really had in mind was tourist business. Right from the start he began dickering with Midwestern Travel, which specialized in arranging sight-seeing tours for vacationists.

The deal was hot now. He had a one-o'clock appointment with Bill Casselman from the agency's Pittsburgh office.

The tourist business was now his only hope of staying on the river. Jenny Sweet had taken the majority of the cargo trade and towing jobs before the previous summer had ended. Farmers had passed up the Jupiter to wait until the Valley Lily came along, so they could bask in Jenny Sweet's smile.

Both boats lost money, but Axel had no financial reserve, while Jenny Sweet still had some of her inheritance money. She had offered him five thousand dollars for the Jupiter.

As a matter of fact it was a fair offer. Axel knew that if he missed out on the tourist business, about all the Jupiter was worth would be junk. He wondered why she had insisted on an immediate decision.

JENNY SWEET was skating in reckless proximity to the danger zone in the channel. Then she headed up-stream beneath the bridge, and passed from sight beyond the stone pier in midchannel.

Axel waited for her to emerge into view upriver. Then he heard a faint scream.

"I told you so!" he yelled as he seized the throw line and ran down the companionway. Crossing the plank to the ice, he ran toward midriver.

Then he saw Jenny Sweet. She was skating serenely in the shadow of the bridge, where the sun had not yet thawed the ice.

Feeling a trifle foolish, Axel came to a quick stop. And instantly the ice gave way beneath him and he was in the water.

He kicked back to the surface and reached the edge of the rotted crumbling ice. It wouldn't support his weight, so he laid an arm on it to buoy his body.

He seethed with inner volcanic fury and his teeth chattered. Just a dumb Swede, he reflected. They'd be telling this one for years on the river.

Jenny Sweet raced toward him. She looked pale, frightened. "Stay there," Axel snarled.

He managed to uncoil the soaked line. After several attempts he slid an end within her reach. She dug in her skates and dragged him ig-

(*Continued on page 83*)

You read it every day—woman falls in love with husband's best friend. Barry had read it, too—never dreaming it could happen to him. And now a numbing realization was upon him, and suddenly all the lights were out and all the clocks had stopped

BY URSULA PARROTT

ILLUSTRATED BY ROY BESSER

TOO BUSY FOR Love

RÉSUMÉ OF PART ONE

AFTER five years of being married to Barry Chandler, Natalie realized that her life was empty. An industrial architect, Barry's frequent absences on government work had left her much alone, bored and restless. To her, the artificial fireplace in their streamlined New York apartment was a symbol of their lack of roots. In the beginning they had talked of a house in the country, and of children, but these had apparently been forgotten. So had Natalie's twenty-fourth birthday, which she was celebrating with Quentin Wyatt while Barry was in Seattle. They dined and danced, and when Quentin spoke words of love and urged her to divorce Barry and marry him, Natalie was in a mood to listen.

That night she wrote her husband, asking for a divorce, but she did not speak of Quentin. Shocked by her letter, Barry was about to fly to New York when he was detained by an important conference. Then he got an inspiration. He would telephone Wyatt, their mutual friend, ask him to see Natalie and report back. Feeling greatly relieved, Barry placed the New York call—and waited.

PART TWO—CONCLUSION

DURING the two hours and forty minutes he waited for the completion of that transcontinental call, Barry Chandler remained outwardly composed.

The delay was understandable. Two transports had arrived that day. The lines were swamped with the calls of servicemen returned from the Pacific and eager to talk to their families. During dinner and afterward in the lobby, Barry reread Natalie's letter for the ninth, tenth, and eleventh times.

Natalie wanted a divorce, a different sort of life, had ceased to have faith in the future they had planned, or in him. (That was what it amounted to, though she was too kindhearted to state it bluntly.) The letter sounded neither feverish nor hysterical, only—rather dreadfully—resolved.

He stared at the room clerk's desk before which a line waited patiently for the possible cancellations which would not develop. But he did not see the desk nor the line. He only saw Natalie in one of those pretty frocks he loved to have her buy.

Barry never had told her that whenever he came across a magazine devoted to women's fashions he glanced through it, deciding that one thing or another would look well on Natalie. Arrived in New York, he then might mention, "I saw some pictures of feathered hats somewhere. Why don't you get yourself a rose-colored feathered hat?"

He grew more and more depressed. There seemed to be so very many things he had not found words to tell her! How much he minded not going to the war, for instance.

At its beginning he had been only twenty-eight, with engineering as well as architectural background; had applied for and been granted a Navy commission.

But Washington said flatly, "No. You are more useful designing war plants." That was that. But Barry used to envy Navy officers with their gold braid; not envy the gold braid exactly, but the chance it represented to serve more directly—and less safely. One used to be ashamed of being so safe. (And sometimes he had worried lest Natalie was ashamed of his civilian status.)

When they gave Quentin a party before his departure for the East, Barry had thought with an absurd twinge of jealousy, She looks at him with more *respect* than she has looked at me lately. It's natural.

Though Barry disliked troubling the overworked hotel operator, he could not help inquiring twice in the second hour whether she was making progress on his call.

IT was a very young, very redhaired lieutenant, seated beside Barry, who mentioned the overdue bus. "Are you waiting for someone on it?" he asked. "It is a half hour late."

"No. I am waiting for a long-distance call," Barry said, and added for politeness' sake, "Are you just arrived from overseas?"

"Yes, I am. My wife is coming in on the bus, also my year-old daughter. I never have seen *her*. She is redheaded."

He took out his battered snapshots, told Barry that his wife was now twenty-one, he himself twenty-four, that he would be discharged from the Army immediately, had not the least idea what next, but it would all be fine because with a wife like his, any man would succeed.

In the midst of his own preoccupation, Barry was touched and expressed interest, so the lieutenant went on talking.

"She bought a little farm up near Spokane while I was overseas, has been running it. She knew no more about farming than I did about artillery fire when we first were in love. We were both at college."

(*Continued on page 75*)

Barry could not drive any farther. "There is your birthday present, Natalie," he said, "—the house."

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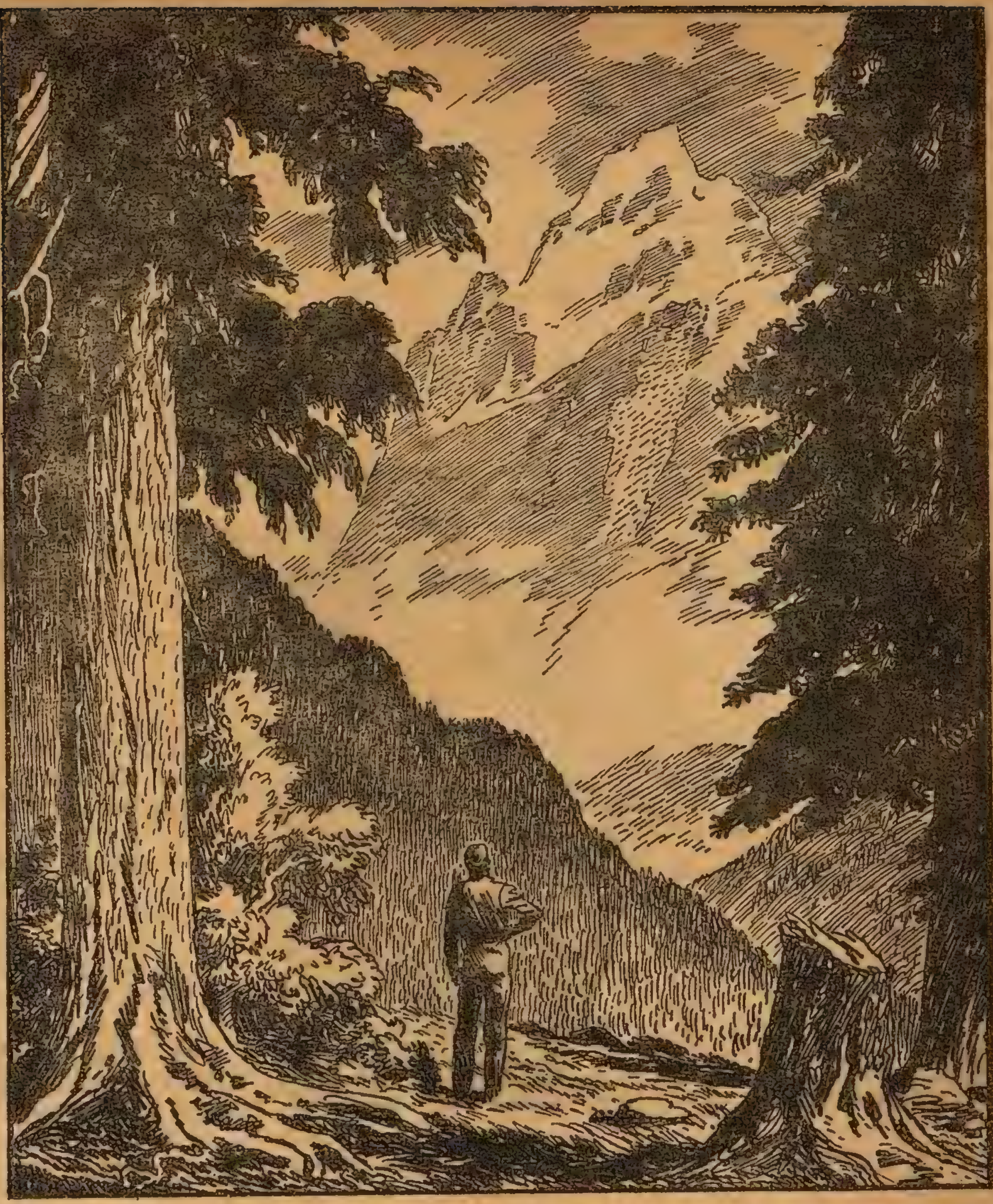
A Liberty Book Condensation
Reading Time One Evening

By
JAMES RAMSEY ULLMAN

There were Martin the American, and Carla the Viennese, who loved each other; there were the Englishman, the Frenchman, the German, and faithful Andreas, their Swiss guide. All of them wanted to reach the summit of the beautiful mountain. This is a pointed allegory as well as a heart-gripping saga of love, fear, and courage.



ILLUSTRATED BY LAWRENCE BUTCHER

The WHITE TOWER

N*OW they were there again. . . .*

They were in the seventh and last flight, and the city, as they came over it, was no longer a city but a lake of orange fire. There were the bright beams of the searchlights and the tracers rising in a flowing dome against the darkness. There were the swift, scudding shapes of the other planes. In the sudden glare that filled the cockpit Martin Ordway could see the face of his co-pilot, Ted Riggs, bent tensely over the instrument panel. He saw the yellow down on the cheekbones, the tiny pulse throbbing in the tight line of the jaw.

The next moment came Bixler's voice: "Bombs away!"

. . . and now it was over again.

Ordway pulled toward him and the plane climbed and banked. Around them the flak exploded. There was a white flash behind his head, followed by a shattering roar, and he was hurled forward against the bindings of his seat. The plane bucked and lurched. Its two engines coughed and slackened. Ordway's gloved hands moved from wheel to throttle to controls and his feet worked swiftly among the pedals. The engines caught for an instant, stuttered again, and the nose of the plane went down. Then the engines took hold again.

They began to climb. The flak was beneath them now. The phosphorescent glow of the instrument dials had gone out, and it was black in the plane. There was no sound except the deep humming of the engines.

Martin Ordway removed a glove and passed his hand slowly over his eyes. Then he flicked the key of the interphone jackbox. "Everyone all right?" he asked. The interphone was dead.

"Ted?" he said, turning.

Riggs, the co-pilot, stirred and mumbled a few words.

"Ted—you've been hit."

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Published by J. B. Lippincott Co., New York, N. Y. Price $3.00.

"I guess I have." Riggs' voice sounded low and hoarse.

Ordway removed his throat-mike. "Bix!" he called. "Harry!" There was no reply. Ordway unfastened his safety belt and leaned over toward Riggs. "Ted. Think you can hold your wheel a minute?"

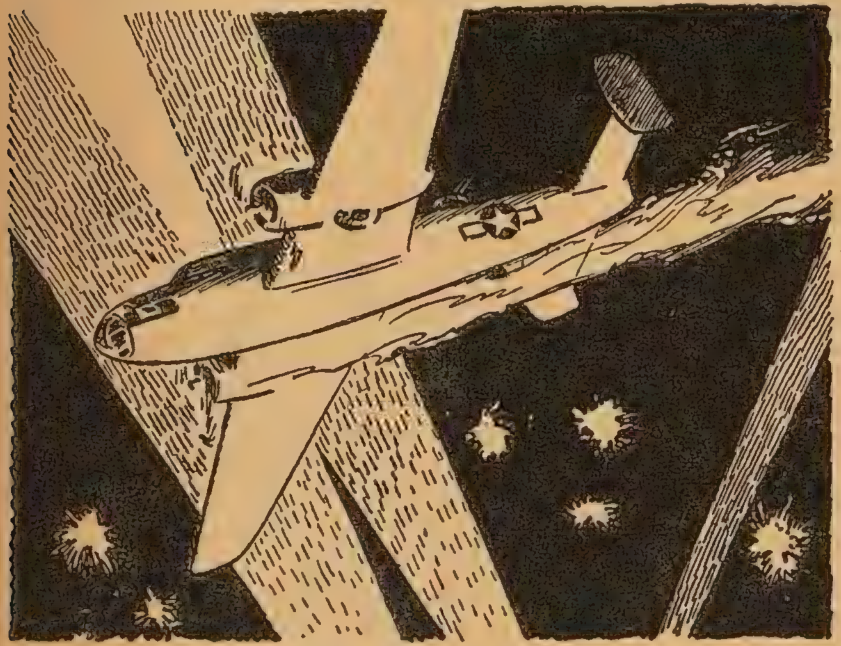
"Sure I can, Marty." The voice was a little stronger.

Ordway half clambered, half crept between the wheels and down through the entrance to the bombardier's compartment. On the floorplates lay a dark, sprawling shape. Taking his flashlight from his overalls, he let its beam fall on the face of Lieutenant Bixler, the bombardier-navigator. . . .

Crawling back between the wheels and the pilots' seats he stood up and groped his way back into the body of the plane, down the two steps from the cockpit to the radio compartment.

"Harry," he said.

Sergeant Wasniewicz, the radio-gunner, was seated at his control panel, his head resting on the bench among the coils and dials. Ordway raised it and looked into his face. . . .



When he got back to his seat he could see that Riggs was sitting erect. But his head seemed to be awkwardly pulled down between his shoulders.

"I'm going to fix you up." Ordway took his first-aid kit from the pouch in his parachute harness.

"How're Harry and Bix?" the boy asked suddenly.

"They're all right, Ted."

"No they're not. They're washed up."

Ordway took his own wheel between his knees and began opening the dressing-packet.

"I'm washed up too, Marty," Riggs said.

"The hell you are." Still holding the wheel with his legs, Ordway leaned over toward him, the dressing in one hand, his flashlight in the other.

Riggs' eyes were open and very blue. His mouth was open too, and from it a gleaming crimson stain spread downward across the front of his overalls. Minute pinkish bubbles rose and fell between his lips.

Ordway snapped off the beam and shifted back into his seat. "We'll be home soon, Ted," he said.

The right engine was missing badly now. The plane was listing to the right.

Five minutes had passed when Riggs spoke for the last time: "First thing I'm going to do when I get home is marry that girl, Marty. . . . Know what I always call her? Biscuit. Her name's Frances, of course, but I call her Biscuit. . . . Isn't that the goddamndest name for a girl? . . . Biscuit. . . ." Then he died.

The left engine maintained a steady hum; the right one rose, stuttered, fell and rose again. Behind him Ordway could hear the gentle creaking of the bomb-bay doors that there had not been time to close. Peering down he could distinguish nothing. The plane might still be over Bavaria or Württemberg. It might be over France, Switzerland, or even winging southward toward Italy and the sea. He did not know, nor did it seem to him greatly to matter. Certainly it did not matter to First Lieutenant Theodore Riggs, Second Lieutenant John Bixler or Technical Sergeant Harry Wasniewicz.

Martin Ordway reached forward and opened the emergency panel of the windscreen, and a torrent of mist poured in a cold tide through the cockpit. He drew in a deep breath and moved his tongue slowly around his lips. The mist did not smell or taste of the sea. And yet . . . somewhere, he had known that smell and that taste before; somewhere he had felt that same curious fusion of wind and mist pouring through his hair, his clothing, his skin, his very bones and blood. Sometime very long ago . . .

Through the filmed windscreen and the blurred whirl of the propellors he could see only great banks of vapor streaming toward him through the darkness. Beyond them were space and emptiness. . . . And then, for an imperceptible moment the mist seemed to thin, revealing the night beyond. Something was there, behind the miles and the darkness, filling the sky and the night. The merest white evanescent gleam in the emptiness and nothingness of space. His eyes could not actually see it; but it existed. *It was there.* It rose like a monstrous beacon into the sky, burning through the darkness with an inner incandescent power of its own. . . .

The plane lurched sharply to the right again and began to fall. Martin picked himself up from the floor of the cockpit, where he had been thrown. He crept past the dark, still figure in the other seat and the dark, still figure on the floorplates behind. He reached the open bomb-bay, crouched over it and felt the great waves of air battering up at his face and clothing. He jumped.

He spread his arms and held them trembling against the tides of air that sought to pinion them to his sides. . . . The ring, his airman's instinct told him; it's time to pull the ring. . . . There was the violent, familiar jerk and the creak of canvas webbing. He closed his eyes.

When he reopened them a great ceiling of gray stratus clouds filled the sky above him, but he could see the dark earth below coming up to meet him. A rutted road stretched away between open fields. It threaded a stand of timber and crossed the stream on a tiny bridge; then it curved suddenly back and wound up the side of a gently sloping knoll. On the knoll there was a building with many white, pointed gables raised against the dark mountainside beyond. A single yellow prick of light gleamed from one of its windows. A feather of gray smoke rose from its chimney.

Yes, of course, he thought. You have known all along where you were going. It is the valley, and you have come back at last. . . .

IN that long ago summer of 1932 there had been Martin Ordway, the American; and his Austrian friends Stefan Raudiger and Carla Dehn. Sunday afternoons—occasionally on other days as well—they had walked up the Aarntal Path and had tea with Nicholas Radcliffe, the English geologist who lived in an isolated chalet halfway up the side of the valley. By then he had already lived in Kandermatt for five years, and he knew the valley and the mountains above it as well as the most experienced of the guides. He had been an accomplished mountaineer in his younger years and on those quiet, sunlit afternoons on the verandah of his chalet he would talk about the great climbs of the past. He had been a member of the celebrated 1924 Everest expedition and seen the great climber George Leigh Mallory, with a companion, creep upward along a skyline ridge, a scant eight hundred feet beneath the summit of the world, and disappear forever into the mist.

"Why do you think Mallory wanted to climb it so terribly?" Martin had asked.

"Why do you three want to climb the White Tower?"

Martin was silent for a while, his dark eyes squinting upward at that great mountain.

"I don't know," he said.

"Mallory knew. In London, when he had given a lecture, someone stood up and said: 'I think I understand *how* you try to climb Everest, Mr. Mallory, but I still don't see why you *want* to climb it.' Mallory stood for a little while, thinking.

" 'I want to climb it,' he said, 'because it is there.' "

AND now Martin Ordway opened his eyes. After a few minutes he raised himself on his elbows. He looked at the iron bedstead that rose beyond his feet, at the yellow-flowered wallpaper, the table and chairs, the porcelain bowl and pitcher on the washstand, the window with its tie-back white net curtains. Beyond the window was mist, and the room was filled with a flat, watery light. Martin looked at his watch. It had stopped at twenty minutes of ten.

He pushed the bedclothes aside, swung his feet slowly to the floor and stood up. He was lightheaded and his legs felt rubbery, but he seemed to be neither injured nor ill. He looked down at the unfamiliar blue cotton pajamas he was wearing. Then he crossed to the washstand and stared at the old young-man's face that stared back at him from the little mirror.

It was a strong face, well-boned and deeply tanned, but the fine lines at the corners of eyes and mouth were too many and too deep and the flesh over the cheekbones was drawn tight and thin. A day's growth of stubble bristled on the long line of his jaw, and his black hair rose in a ruffled crest on his head.

He turned. There was a pile of clothing on a chair, but it was not his. On the floor were a pair of walking shoes, with gray woolen socks tucked into them. He opened the door of a cupboard behind the bed. His own things were not there. After a moment's hesitation, he put on the strange clothing. He poured water into the bowl on the washstand, splashed his face and head, and smoothed back his hair. Then he crossed to the door and opened it.

A LONG, dimly lighted hall stretched away before him. He walked down it slowly, descended a flight of stairs, and crossed an empty foyer into an empty, oak-panelled lounge.

Wide French windows formed one of the walls. He opened them and stepped outside.

Instantly the fog closed in around him. There were ten yards of damp lawn before him; then a clump of bushes, and a low fieldstone wall on which a girl was sitting.

Ordway took a few steps toward her and stopped. She watched him for a moment; then she arose and approached him.

"Hello, Martin," she said.

Ordway stood looking at the straight, slender figure in tweed skirt and white shirtwaist; at the soft, oval face; at the short, coppery hair bound back in a green ribbon; at the full mouth, the small uptilted nose, the wide-spaced gray-green eyes.

He put out his hands and took hers. "Hello, Carla."

They stood beside the wall, and his eyes moved slowly over the inn and its white gables piercing the mist above. "I'm here," he said.

"Yes, Martin. You're in Kandermatt. Did you know it last night?"

"No." He paused, shutting his eyes. "That is—there was a moment when I imagined I was. . . ." He opened his eyes. "What happened?"

"You came down in the pasture at two this morning. Andreas was out, looking after one of his goats that was sick. He saw you, and then he came and woke Herr Knubel, and the two of them managed to carry you up here. They did not know who you were until they got you inside. They said you were barely conscious. At first they thought you were badly hurt, but when we got you upstairs and undressed we saw you were just exhausted. Frau Knubel kept wanting to wake you up and make you eat and drink something, but you just slept and slept."

"Andreas," he said quietly. "And Herr Knubel and Frau Knubel. They're still here."

"Yes. Mr. Radcliffe still lives in his bungalow up on the Aarntal Path."

"And Stefan?"

She averted her eyes. "Stefan is not here."

He stood quietly for a moment, looking down at her. "But you are here," he said, releasing her hand.

"Not as a guest any more. I work around the inn. For Frau Knubel." She looked up at him again and her voice suddenly changed. "You are a soldier now, Martin? A flyer?"

"Yes."

"You have been in Europe long?"

"Almost two years, counting England and Africa. With the American Army Air Corps—in France." He stopped suddenly. Instinctively he looked upward. "Did it—?"

The girl shook her head. "No, it did not come down here."

"Ted," he said quietly. "Bix—Harry—" For a long moment he was silent, staring out into the mist. Then with a sudden gesture he reached out and took her hands again. "Carla, today—here, now, this very minute—is the first time in two years that the war has been far away. Don't let's talk about it. Not quite yet. Let's just talk about Kandermatt. About you."

Her hands, in his, were cold and trembling slightly. "Carla," he said, "what's happened? Tell me—"

There was a sound of footsteps, and two figures approached them, one a baldish, wispy little man who shook Martin's hand in both of his. "Herr Ordway," he murmured, over and over again.

"Hello, Herr Knubel," Martin said.

"And you remember your old guide." The innkeeper indicated his companion. "Old Andreas Benner."

Martin stared at the oaken stump of a man who stood before him; at the massive shoulders, the square, weathered face, the clipped, gingery moustache, the sky-blue eyes. He felt his hand compressing in a long-forgotten granite clasp.

"My old friend," he said. Benner's lips parted in a slow smile. "It was you who found me, Andreas."

"And lucky for you it was," Herr Knubel put in. "There is not another person in the valley could have got you up here from the pasture." He paused and chuckled. "He came up here first and called me down, but why I still do not know. I held one foot and the parachute while he carried the rest of you."

The three men laughed. Then there was a silence.

"I don't know where to begin, Herr Knubel," Martin said at last. "All I can say is—well, that here I am."

"And here you are welcome."

"Thank you. Only I don't know what I can—"

Herr Knubel raised a small, important hand. "You are a guest of the Gasthof zum Blauen Himmel, Herr Ordway. Just as in the old days, only your name will not be on the register and you will not find a bill under your door on Saturday mornings."

"But you'll get in trouble, won't you? I'm a uniformed combatant in a neutral country."

"I see no uniform."

"But even so, I'm subject to arrest."

"Herr Ordway, the authorities have not the remotest notion that you are here. You can remain with us, unmolested, until you decide what you wish to do. Andreas and I have been discussing some of the possibilities for your escape out of Switzerland. Andreas is a member of the Mountain Patrol Corps," Herr Knubel said. "But all that is for when you are rested. It will be better, I think, if you do not go down to the village. They are good people there, but they will talk. Here at the *Gasthof* there are only myself, Frau Knubel and Fräulein Dehn, and a half-witted kitchen girl. As guests, there are Monsieur and Madame Delambre—they are French and very well-to-do; no trouble there—and the Herr Hein."

"Swiss?"

"No, German. Convalescent of some sort. He keeps almost always to himself. However, simply to take no chances whatever: for them you shall be Mr. Ordway of the International Red Cross in Geneva."

From the house came Frau Knubel's peremptory voice calling to them that Martin must come in and eat.

IN the lounge they encountered the Frenchman, and Herr Knubel introduced the two men. Paul Delambre was tall. He had a thin, fine-drawn, aristocratic face, prominent nose and high forehead, and wore shell-rimmed glasses with thick lenses.

"Herr Ordway," said the innkeepr, "it was Monsieur here who supplied the clothes you are wearing."

"It's very good of you, Monsieur Delambre."

"A pleasure, sir." Delambre waved a deprecatory hand. "The trousers, I see, are a little on the brief side."

"Not nearly as brief as what I'd be wandering around in without them."

The three men laughed. Benner, who had been standing in the background, advanced and cleared his throat. "At five o'clock I must report at Patrol Headquarters," he said. "I will come back tomorrow at the same time. Perhaps then I will have some information."

"Andreas," Martin said. "You're sure you won't be getting yourself into trouble?"

"Do not worry, Herr Martin." A slow smile creased the broad mahogany face. "By this time old Andreas knows how to find his way around a few other things besides mountains."

After Martin had eaten he shaved and then returned to the foyer, stood for a few moments, undecided, then crossed to the front door and went out. Fog still obscured everything beyond a radius of a few yards. Following the low stone wall to a break where a dirt road started down from the terrace, he stopped again for a moment. Then he followed the road down to a footpath forking off to the left into the forest. Now he was walking along a winding gray-green tunnel, and the earth was springy and root-veined beneath his feet. Ahead of him, behind the forest and the mist, he could hear the deep rumbling of the Aarn.

Suddenly his thoughts went back to the day before—the night before. He felt Wasniewicz's heavy body slithering across the aluminum floorplates as the plane lurched; he saw the tiny pulse flickering in Riggs' white jawline and the blood spreading down across the front of his flying suit.

Bixler, John R.
Wasniewicz, Harry
Riggs, Theodore L.

With the prescribed notations. And a letter to a girl called Biscuit. . . . He held his hands to his face.

There was the report to be written. *(Reports on all missions will be written out as soon as possible, so that details will not be forgotten.)* That was if you got back. *Ordway, Martin F., Capt., Plt., 31, Larchmont, N. Y.*, was a line in a book, with a tentative MIA pencilled opposite. The Martin Ordway who really existed was a tired, solitary man in sweater, sports shirt and too-short worsted trousers, sitting on a knob of rock in a forest in the remote Alpine valley of Kandermatt.

He looked at his watch. It was almost seven. The sun had already set behind the peaks to the northwest, and valley, foothills and the range itself lay spread in a deep sea of twilight. But a single white cloud, high above them, was still shining. As he watched, its whiteness turned gradually to pink, and from pink to flaming fire. Then all color faded, and it was a cold, radiant white shape unmoving and immutable in the sky. And he knew it was no cloud. For a long while he remained staring upward at the snowy crown of the White Tower.

It was there.

WHEN he returned to the inn he went into the lounge. Delambre was seated in an armchair near the windows, reading a book. "Oh, hello," Ordway said.

"Good afternoon." Delambre closed his book. "May I suggest that we have a drink together, Monsieur Ordway?"

"Nothing I'd like better. But there's no longer a bar, is there?"

"No, but fortunately I am in a position to offer—let me see now—cinzano, anise, cognac Courvoisier four-star, Holland gin, and a Merseault '28."

"The cognac sounds fine. That is, if you—"

"It is my choice too. If you will excuse me a moment, I shall bring it down."

He returned carrying a bottle and two brandy inhalers. He set the glasses down, filled them and handed one to Ordway. *"Alors—aux survivants—"* Ordway looked at him questioningly. "To—the survivors."

They drank, and Delambre refilled the glasses while they talked.

"There is a world at war," he said suddenly, draining his third glass. "And there is also a world of peace. There is the miracle of a six-ton bomb and there is the miracle of a snowflake. There is the field of rotting corpses and there is the White Tower. Ah yes, there is still enough of the good, the true, the beautiful left in the world, Monsieur Ordway, if one has but the wit to find them. Come, I propose another toast." He raised his glass. "To all good and true and beautiful things. To warm glowing cognac in crystal inhalers; to lovely women and the cold beautiful mountains—and atrophy. . . ."

CARLA DEHN walked in the darkness along the winding road. She had been walking since mid-morning, stopping only at long intervals to rest, but she was still not tired. Her footsteps held to their slow, unbroken rhythm as the white gables of the inn swung into view.

As she neared the kitchen door a tall figure approached her. She felt she was going to run, but instead she stood quite still.

"You frightened me," she said.

"No, I didn't," said Martin Ordway. "You knew I'd be here."

She did not answer.

"Why have you been avoiding me?" he asked.

"I haven't. Truly I haven't."

He had cupped her elbow in his hand and was leading her across the terrace. When they came to the low stone wall that ringed it he drew her gently down. They sat facing the valley and mountains. He lighted cigarettes for them and they were silent for a while.

"Carla—" he said. "Aren't you glad to see me again?"

"Oh, yes, Martin. Yes. It's only that—that things are different."

"The valley isn't different. The forests and the mountains and the stars—they aren't different. You haven't changed." She started to speak, but he did not let her. "That first instant yesterday afternoon, when I found you I said to myself: She's not a little girl any longer. But she's still Carla. She's still—" He stopped and looked at her in the darkness. "Lovely."

They fell silent again. Ordway flicked his cigarette away. "Tell me about Stefan," he said. "Do you ever see him?"

"Please, Martin—" The sound seemed to have been ripped out of her, half words and half a sob. With a quick, convulsive gesture she swung herself around and in another moment would have been running. But Ordway caught her by the arm.

"Don't! Don't!" She was looking up at him almost with terror. "Oh, Martin—what is it you want of me?"

He gripped her arm tightly and looked down at her. Presently she was no longer pulling away. He let his hand slip gently down until it held hers.

"I want you to meet me at the top of the west pasture at nine tomorrow morning," he said. "We're going to walk up the path to the hut."

"I can't." She held her head averted.

"You don't want to go?" he asked.

"Oh yes, yes I do. Only—"

He released her hand. "At nine," he said. "Goodnight, Carla."

"Goodnight, Martin."

"Binks," he said.

"Goodnight—Binks."

THE ground fell away in a gentle slope into a small V-shaped pocket in the mountainside. There was a thin silver stream flowing across its floor, a sparse carpet of moss and minute wildflowers between the rocks, and in its center the squat, weathered Heilweg Hut.

"Let's eat outside," Martin said.

Carla laid out a long loaf of fresh bread, two chicken legs and a great golden pat of Neufchatel cheese. They could see the valley of Kandermatt below. Incredibly tiny and remote it appeared now across the oceans of blue air. When they had finished eating, Martin lay back on the moss, and the sun and sky and the mountains swam gently together before his half-closed eyes.

"You are tired of war, aren't you, Martin?" she asked. "I mean tired in your bones. In your soul."

"I wouldn't know about my soul, I'm afraid. Along with a few hundred million other people I seem to have misplaced it."

"Don't you believe in what you are fighting for?"

He was silent a moment, squinting up into the golden sun. "Yes, I suppose I do. . . . Only something seems to happen to you after a while." He smiled a little. "So we are both afraid, and tired and trying to escape. Trying to get back to where we once were." He paused, but she did not speak. "Isn't that why you are here?"

She said in a low, flat voice, "You don't know anything about my reason."

"But that is what you're going to tell me now."

"No," she said. Her gray-green eyes were wide and staring and her whole body was trembling gently with a silent sob. "Oh, Martin, Martin—I have tried so hard to make a new life here—to work and find peace—to forget you and him and everything that had been."

"Him?"

"Stefan. I married him, Martin." When she resumed speaking her voice was quiet and almost toneless. "We were married when he was twenty-three and I was just nineteen. He got a position as a reporter on a newspaper in Linz—you remember he always wanted to write. For almost two years we were very happy.

"Then in the spring of 1938 there was the *Anschluss.* One night everything was the way it had always been, and then the next morning the Germans were there. Stefan had never had much use for the Nazis but, like everyone else, all he could do now was wait and see what happened.

"The Germans closed the paper for a few days and began calling in the editors. Finally it was Stefan's turn, and he was gone for two days and a night, and then at last, on the evening of the second day, he came home again. The next morning he went back to work.

"And then suddenly—or at least it was suddenly to me—Stefan was offered a position as assistant editor on one of the big weekly magazines in Vienna. It was a wonderful job for such a young man, and I was happier and prouder of him than ever."

SHE kept on, her voice low and even, "Several more months went by before I realized that Stefan had become a Nazi. Oh, I knew he worked for an officially approved publication, of course, but that he was an actual, active party member I never could have dreamed.

"One night a few weeks after France had surrendered there had been a meeting of the staff of the magazine at our house. When Stefan went up to bed, I stayed down in the living room, reading a book. I was just getting ready to go upstairs when I found some papers they had been drawing up at the meeting. Mostly they consisted of a long list of names of local people whom the magazine was investigating in connection with a big drive on 'subversive elements' in the city. One or two of them, perhaps, had been politically active at one time or another, but most of them were—well—just people. There was one of the typesetters on the magazine, the old woman who owned the delicatessen down the block, a violinist at the *Staatsoper* who was an old friend of Stefan's and had been at our house many times.

"I burned every sheet. I got my hat, coat and pocketbook, and left the house. I had my papers and an old passport in my pocketbook, and I managed to get across the frontier into Switzerland. After a while I wrote a letter to Herr Knubel, asking him if he could give me some sort of work, and he wrote back telling me to come on, and I came. I have been here ever since."

She was silent. Martin moved over and put his arm around her and held her gently and close.

"Carla," he said softly. . . .

Presently he stood up. He walked away slowly, his hands in his pockets. He rounded an outcropping of gray rock, and the hut and the stream and the girl beside the stream were gone. Twelve years were gone.

The path curved upward among the boulders, twisted back on itself, climbed again. On the crest of a low, open saddle between two ascending ridges, Martin stood still. Directly in front of him was a tiny lake the color of purest cobalt. On the far side ground rose again, levelled off and spread away into gray miles of desolation. The waste narrowed gradually as it stretched into the distance. The mountain walls slowly converged.

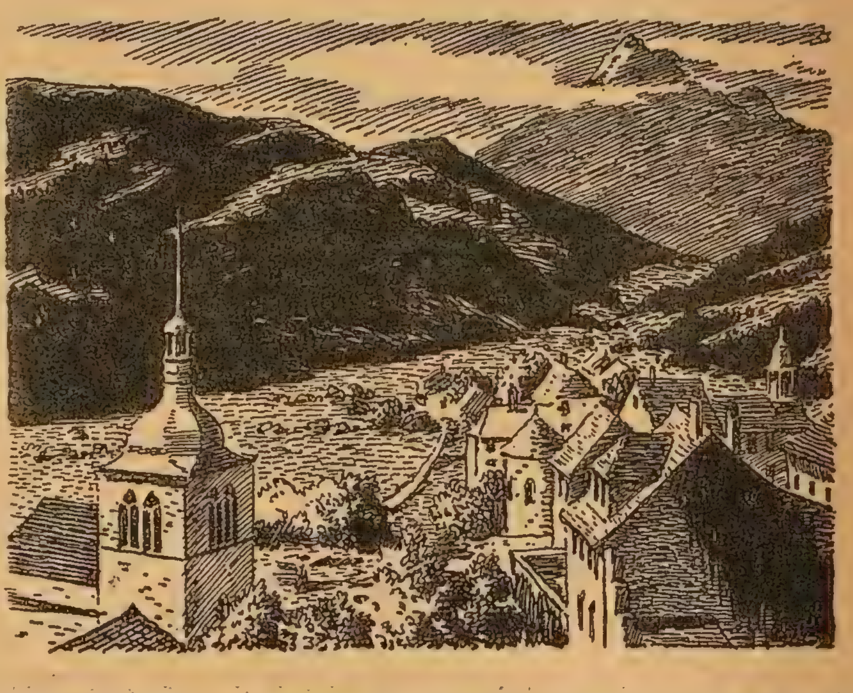
And then . . .

The mountain walls fell away. Naked and gigantic, the White Tower rose. In a single sweeping gesture it climbed from the earth into the sky. Its glaciers rose to its buttresses, its buttresses to its trunk, its trunk to its ridges, its ridges, up, up, up, past crag and shoulder, precipice and ice wall, to the last gleaming crown of summit snow. Each merged into the other, became the other, became the mountain. It seemed to Martin Ordway, as he stared up at it now through the blue miles of space, to possess the finality of death itself.

Of life itself. . . .

"I shouldn't have gone off like that," he said when he came back to Carla.

"It is all right, Martin. I knew where you had gone."



She was silent a moment, looking at him. "Do you still want to be alone?"

"No. I've been alone enough. We both have."

He took her hand, and she sat down beside him. "What have you been thinking of?" she asked. "Stefan?"

"A little."

"And of what else?

"Oh, Norden bombsights and you and myself."

"And about the White Tower, too?"

"Yes," he said. "About the White Tower too." He was looking into the distance with dark, squinting eyes. "Carla—" he said presently. "Have you ever felt— After all these years do you still ever want—to try . . ." He stopped and turned his head and looked at her. Her eyes were wide and burning on his face, and her hand in his, was suddenly tight and warm and gently trembling.

"Yes, Martin," she whispered almost fiercely. "Oh yes."

ANDREAS BENNER came up to where Martin was sitting on the verandah steps, took off his green Patrol Corps cap and shook hands. They crossed the terrace to the low stone wall, and as they walked Martin put his arm around the guide's broad shoulder and held him tight.

"It's good to see you," he said. "Do you hear, Andreas? You don't know what it means to find something in the world that's still what it used to be."

"It is good to see you too, Herr Martin," said the guide. They sat down on the wall. "I have spoken yesterday with a man in Interlaken whom I know, and he thinks perhaps they can get you out."

"Did he have any idea how soon—"

"He thought in ten days perhaps. Or two weeks."

Ten days would give them time, Martin thought. If Andreas would do it. If he would only do it. . . .

"Fräulein Dehn and I were up in the mountains yesterday," he said. "We visited the Heilweg Hut, and I followed the path up to the lake. It was very blue. And the wasteland beyond it was gray. The mountains were gray too—only the Weissturm had any real snow on it. Do you remember all the times we asked you to try it with us?"

"*Ja,* Herr Martin," said Benner. "I remember them."

"And all the times you turned us down?"

"*Ja.*"

Martin drew in a long breath. "I'm going to ask you again, Andreas," he said quietly.

Benner was looking meditatively at his hands. "The Weissturm, it is not like other mountains," he said quietly. "It is a great and terrible thing. Also storms and the snow will be coming soon."

Martin said nothing.

"There is little equipment available these days. The huts are not stocked. The old routes and markers will be wiped out with the years. All the chances would be against us. You know that, Herr Martin?"

"Those aren't the real reasons you've kept away from the Weissturm all these years. Or the reasons you're afraid of it now. There's something else."

"*Ja,* Herr Martin, also there is something else." Martin could almost physically feel Andreas drawing his body and mind together. "My father, Franz Benner, was a guide here in Kandermatt before me," he said at last. "He was a great guide, and alone of all the guides of that time he believed that the Weissturm could be climbed from this side. Many times he tried it. Each time he got a little higher than he had been before—higher than any man had ever been on the south and east sides—but never could he quite get to the top. And then, in the last summer before the first great war, he tried one last time with two English *Herren* who were famous climbers of that day, and this time he did not come back. I was only fifteen then, Herr Martin, but I swore to the Lord and the Virgin, this I will do: I will climb to the top of this beautiful, terrible mountain that has killed my father."

"And now at last it *is* the time, isn't it?"

The guide raised his head again and looked at Martin steadily. "Yes, with God's grace, it is the time."

BENNER'S thoughts moved as his body moved—slowly, deliberately, warily. Herr Knubel's thoughts, when they told him, exploded about his tiny office like so many snapping firecrackers.

"You have all the rope you need, Andreas? . . . And the axes and crampons? And tents? . . . Food . . . Clothes. Ah yes, clothes for Herr Ordway here. We shall have to think about that. . . ." His little chipmunk's eyes were sparkling as he looked from Ordway to Benner to Carla Dehn. "It is like the old days, *meine Kinder!*"

Benner had taken a sheet of paper from his pocket and was adding to the list on it in a slow, careful hand. Martin studied it over his shoulder.

"That's going to be a hell of a lot to carry."

The guide nodded. "Too much, Herr Martin."

"And we can't eliminate any of it?"

"No, Herr Martin, I have been thinking much about this. For such a mountain as the Weissturm three climbers are not enough. Six would give us the best chance."

"There's Doctor Radcliffe," said Carla.

Benner nodded. "He is no longer a young man, but he was once a remarkable climber and he knows the mountains. What do you think, Herr Martin?"

"I think yes," Martin said. "If he'll come."

"There is also Monsieur Delambre," Herr Knubel suggested. "And Herr Hein."

Benner was rubbing his chin reflectively. "I have seen Monsieur Delambre on a few climbs and he appeared to be not bad in his technique. Herr Hein was, of course, a famous mountaineer before the war; but I do not imagine, Herr Martin, that you wish to climb with a German?"

Martin did not answer the question. "How about Delambre's drinking?"

The innkeeper looked surprised. "He has his own supply of brandy, wines, liqueurs—yes. But as for *drinking*—no. What gave you that impression, Herr Ordway?"

"He was drinking this afternoon in the lounge—and something about his eyes, perhaps. Or his hands . . . you're willing to take a chance on him, Andreas?"

"From what I have seen of him, yes."

"All right," said Martin. "We'll ask him."

Carla spoke suddenly. "We do not want the German. . . . Do we, Martin?"

"I don't know," he said slowly. "We can talk more about it after we've seen Radcliffe."

It was mid-afternoon when Martin and Carla came down from Radcliffe's chalet. Reaching the first stile, they sat on the top step and looked out over the valley.

"I'm glad old Nick's coming," Martin said.

"So am I," she said. "What are you going to do about the others, Martin?"

"I think Andreas would like to have them."

"And you—do you want them?"

"Yes, I think I do," he said slowly. "It seems—well—to fit in somehow. With you and me and the mountains and everything that's happened in the last few days. For all I know, Hein's a Luftwaffe pilot. Until a few days ago my job in the world was killing his kind, and his job was probably killing mine. In another couple of weeks it will probably be our job again. But here—now . . . There is a war. And there is the White Tower."

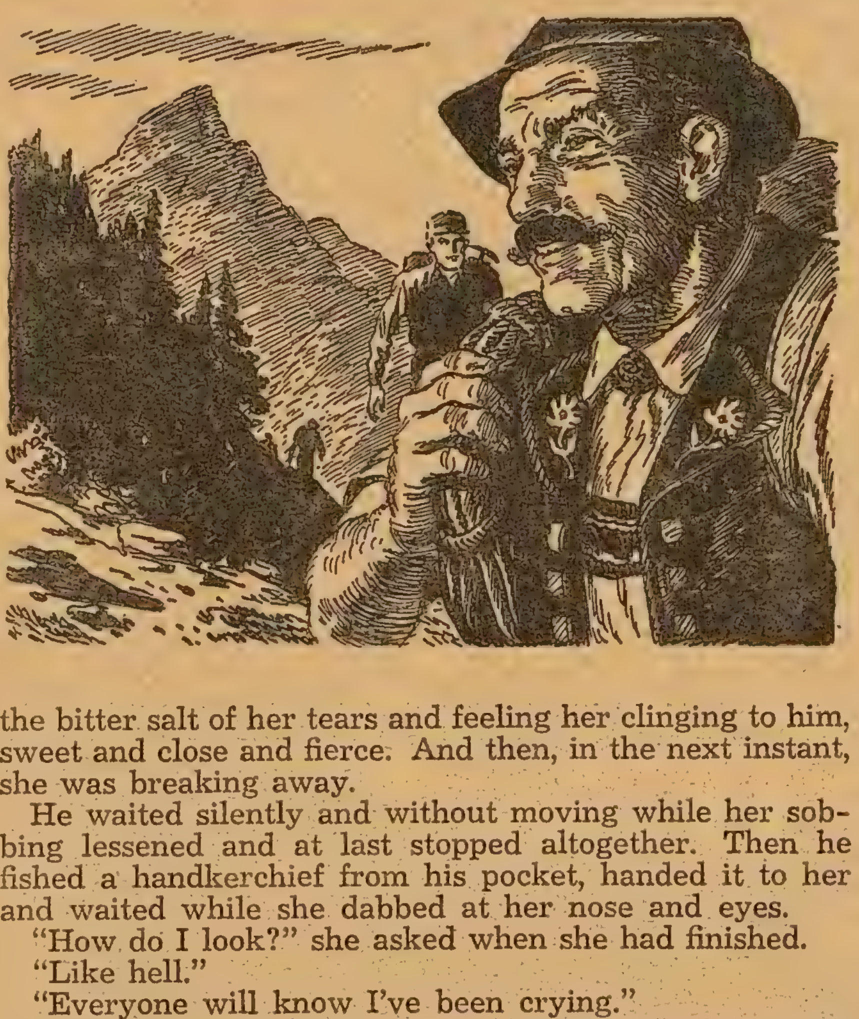
It was a moment before Carla answered. "It is for you to decide," she said quietly. "Without you there would be no climbing of the Tower. There would be—nothing."

He put his hands on her shoulders and turned her around. A low, broken sob rose from deep inside her. With her hands still covering her face, she leaned suddenly against him. "Hold me a minute," she whispered.

He folded his arms around her and held her tenderly.

"Not like a little girl," she said. "Like a woman."

He drew her closer and held her tight. Then her hands were no longer over her face, but around his neck, and her face was raised to his, and he was kissing it, tasting the bitter salt of her tears and feeling her clinging to him, sweet and close and fierce. And then, in the next instant, she was breaking away.



He waited silently and without moving while her sobbing lessened and at last stopped altogether. Then he fished a handkerchief from his pocket, handed it to her and waited while she dabbed at her nose and eyes.

"How do I look?" she asked when she had finished.

"Like hell."

"Everyone will know I've been crying."

"We'll explain that I've been beating you," he said. "Are you sorry I've come back, Carla?"

"No," she said.

"And that we're going to climb the Tower?"

"No."

"And that we need each other?"

"No, Martin."

ON the first day of their preparations they worked until after midnight, and the next morning they began with the sunrise. Toward noon Nicholas Radcliffe appeared with his gear. Delambre brought a variety of jars and tins down from his room to augment the food supply, and two bottles of Courvoisier.

"One for medicinal purposes," he explained. "And one for celebration when we reach the top."

"And if we don't reach it?" Martin asked.

"Then for consolation."

On the previous night Martin had spoken to him about the climb, and the Frenchman had risen slowly to his feet, his whole body tight-strung with emotion. His hand reached out and grasped Martin's tightly; then he turned abruptly away. "I cannot tell you what this means to me," he said, his voice curiously thick.

It was after dinner that evening that Siegfried Hein asked to join them. "You agree that, if you come, we will be simply two men climbing a mountain together?" Martin had said. "Only that and nothing more?"

"Yes, I agree."

You want him, Martin thought. It's cockeyed; it's senseless; it's damnfoolishness. But you want him. . . .

"All right," he said quietly.

And they shook hands.

THEY were walking in single file at intervals of about five yards, with Andreas in the lead, Radcliffe, Delambre, Hein and Ordway following in that order, and Carla in the rear. It was the position she had always preferred when with a group, and she had kept it since they left the hut in spite of repeated male protests. To be last was to be together with others and yet apart from them. And on this day, on this gray twisting path through the high wasteland, she wanted to be alone.

She had tried to think, until there was no thought left in her. And now, as the minutes and then the hours crept by, her gaze moved slowly from one to another of the five men who trudged in line before her. They were all walking at the same pace.

Andreas Benner's heavy, bowed peasant's legs moved as a pendulum moves, devoid alike of either spring or strain. His boots, his pack, the ice ax swinging slowly in his hand seemed a part of him, and his legs and trunk and shoulders gave the impression of subtly molding themselves to the changing contours of the earth.

Nicholas Radcliffe, in a light khaki shirt and a pair of old army shorts, seemed to consist exclusively of great lengths of bony brown arms and legs, held together somehow in the center. He was thin almost to emaciation. And yet his predominant physical quality, Carla recognized, was, strangely, not awkwardness but grace. It was in his high, gaunt shoulders, his free-swinging arms, his long, sure stride. It was in the lean, weather-beaten hawk's face and the bright wintry blue eyes.

The girl's eyes moved on to Paul Delambre. The Frenchman was walking with shorter, quicker steps than either Benner or Radcliffe. His back was bent well forward under his rucksack, his eyes were on the ground, and the point of his ax bit sharply into the scree and gravel as he swung it vigorously. He is limping a little, Carla thought. And then, almost at the same instant that she noticed it, a curious thing happened. He seemed suddenly to have stopped limping. Almost as if conscious of being watched, he abruptly altered his stride. She could see his right boot grinding deep into the gravel, as his legs drove him forward with sharp thrusts.

Behind the Frenchman walked Siegfried Hein. Like Radcliffe he was wearing shorts, Bavarian *Lederhosen.* His booted feet rose and fell with a strong, even rhythm. His shoulders were broad and straight under his pack, and he held his head high. He is a soldier, Carla thought, and the mountain is the enemy, and he is marching to war.

And now she was looking at Martin Ordway, trudging along directly before her on the path.

He is a soldier too, she said to herself. But he did not walk, talk, or think like a soldier. His stride was long, careless and uneven, and he was whistling softly. As if he were strolling down the street to call on a girl. He did not care if he led or followed. And yet, she thought, it is because of him that we are here. It is he, alone among us, who has had the power to will into being the thing that all of us have wanted.

Martin . . . Martin . . .

It was as if her voice had suddenly cried out. She stopped quite still on the path and closed her eyes.

They trudged on through the afternoon. The path climbed the side of a steep scree-slope, descended again into a boulder-choked gorge and climbed still another scree-slope on the far side. Here it petered out almost to invisibility, and for almost an hour they barely crept upwards, ankle-deep in rubble, and slipped back half a step for almost every step forward.

Carla had been climbing with her eyes on the slope, but now presently, as they came onto smoother ground she raised them and saw that Martin had dropped back and was walking almost beside her. He was breathing a little heavily and his face glistened with sweat, but his dark eyes were smiling.

"Tired?" he asked.

She smiled back at him and shook her head.

"Sure you don't want to rest?"

"No, I am fine. Really."

They were silent for a moment. The four men ahead disappeared around a bend in the path.

"Carla," he said quietly.

She raised her face and kissed him lightly and turned away again. Releasing her hand, he placed both his hands along her cheeks and bent her head back and drew her close to him and kissed her on the mouth. His hands moved very slowly, very gently across her cheeks, over her ears and hair, then down along the brown smoothness of her neck and throat. He felt the length of her body close against him and her hands pressed flat against his sides, and then suddenly her arms were around his neck, holding him tightly, tenderly, fiercely.

"I love you, Carla," he said.

"You do not need—"

"Yes," he said, "I do need to say it. I need to say it more than anything I've ever said in my life. And you love me. And you're glad of it."

"Yes."

THE days followed one another, full of stillness and space, as identical as the beads of a shining necklace. There were no hours or miles in the world through which they were now moving; there were only light and darkness and the slow rhythm of their steps.

It was late afternoon of their third day in the wasteland. Martin had stopped to remove a pebble from one of his boots, and now the others were already out of sight ahead. Presently, however, he rounded a sharp bend and found Andreas Benner waiting for him.

"Herr Martin, I am worried about Monsieur Delambre. He is too—too taut—like some rope that has been pulled out with a great heaviness and is ready to break."

"Yes, I've noticed it."

"And on a mountain it is especially not good," said Benner in his quiet, grave voice.

"He hasn't been drinking anything, has he?"

"No. The two bottles of cognac that he brought—I should not have, perhaps, but I looked for them in his rucksack this morning, and they were both still full. Still there is something about him, Herr Martin. In the way he walks; in his eyes. . ."

"And you think we should leave him behind?"

"I am only the guide and you are the *Herr.* Such a thing is for you to decide."

"It would mean an uneven number for the ropes, and heavier packs for the rest of us. And he wants so terribly to do this thing."

"So do we all, Herr Martin."

Martin was silent. "Let's think it over a bit," he said at last. "We've still got a day on the glacier and probably another of reconnoitering, before we get into the real climbing."

FOR almost an hour in the first light of another cloudless morning they stood on the flat promontory of a ridge, studying the details of the savage mountain-world that soared into the sky before them. Their path would be along the twisting white ribbon of the glacier. Then, as the glacier narrowed to its apex, they would come to the final transverse crevasse and, beyond it, to the frozen cascade of the icefall, where the glacier's surface buckled upward and merged with the snow-slopes of the mountain proper.

"There should not be much snow now on the icefall," Benner said. "With the crampons, and some step-cutting perhaps, we should be able to reach the southeast ridge in another two or three hours."

It was this southeast ridge, they had agreed, that offered the most promising route of approach to the upper reaches of the mountain.

They roped up now, teaming off so that the ropes would be of approximately equal strength. On one Benner was in the lead, with Carla second and Ordway third; on the other were Hein, then Delambre, then Radcliffe.

"Here goes," said Martin. And they started off.

They were standing at last on a smooth bulge of powder-covered ice, looking at the broad gash in the glacier before them and the steep, tumbled cascade of the icefall beyond.

Unslinging their packs, they walked back and forth along the rim of the great crevasse; then Benner, Martin and Carla began walking slowly along its lip. It was virtually the same width all the way across: a little less than ten feet. "It would be easy enough to jump," said Martin, "if it weren't for our boots and—"

He broke off, hearing the sound of voices behind him, and the three of them turned. Hein had untied himself from the other rope and was walking away from the crevice, down the glacier. Suddenly he wheeled about and began running back up the slope. He jumped. His crouched body hurtled out from the lower lip of the crevasse, seemed to hang motionless for a moment above the blue depths and landed lightly in the snow a good two feet beyond the farther rim.

"Throw over the ropes now," he called.

They tossed the ends of the two ropes across the chasm, tied their rucksacks and packboards to the other ends, and Hein pulled them over one by one.

"All right," he said. "Come on."

"I think we had better use the rope," Benner said.

He turned at the quick thudding of boots against the snow. Body taut and driving, ice ax extended before him, Delambre reached the edge and jumped. His feet struck on the exact edge of the farther rim—and slipped. Boots and ax dug into the smooth ice-wall. The point of the ax caught, slipped, caught again. Hein knelt, extended a hand, and a moment later Delambre was standing on the snow of the farther lip.

"Please, the rope," said Benner quietly.

Hein knotted the end of one of the ropes around his waist and threw the other end back across the crevasse.

Then he braced himself behind a hummock of ice while Benner, Martin and Carla in turn tied themselves on and jumped. All of them made it with inches to spare.

"You see?" said Hein. "There is nothing to it."

BENNER threw the rope back across to Radcliffe. The Englishman fastened it on. He was running toward them. Then he stopped.

"Did you slip?" Benner called.

Radcliffe shook his head. He leaned on his ax, staring down at the snow at his feet.

Carla touched Martin's arm. "Do you think one of you should—"

But Radcliffe was running again, seemed to hesitate, reached the brink, jumped. Benner and Martin took hold of the rope in front of Hein, braced their feet in the snow and pulled in. Radcliffe's boots hit the near rim, and the rope jerked him forward. He tripped, fell to his knees momentarily and then got slowly to his feet.

"For a new Olympic record," said Martin, grinning.

The Englishman smiled back at him, but did not speak. Sweat beaded his forehead and the knuckles of his bare right hand were white against the haft of his ax.

"We'll rest here for a few minutes," Martin said.

Radcliffe shook his head. "No, we should be getting on."

"That is true," said Siegfried Hein, looking at his watch. "We are already half an hour behind schedule."

But Carla sat down on a hummock of ice, and after a moment the others followed suit. Radcliffe sat for a while without moving, his arms folded across his knees and his eyes on the ground. Then he raised his head.

"Sorry," he said.

"What's there to be sorry for?" Martin asked.

They sat for a few more minutes in silence. Then the Englishman got to his feet.

"All right," he said.

They roped up again, slung on their packs and started.

"You would perhaps like to lead for a while?" Benner asked the German.

"If you wish."

"It is better, I think, to change positions sometimes."

Hein nodded. "*Die Herrschaften* will please tell me if I should go too fast for them."

Their progress became a matter of a step, a pause, a step, a pause, while Hein, working skillfully and methodically with his ax, cut a ladder of footholds in the ice. Time crept past. Mountainside and footholds crept past. . . .

THEY pitched their camp on a level stretch of snow about a third of the way up the slope. They squatted on their half-emptied packs in the space between the tents and heated a supper of tinned stew and tea. By the time they had finished eating it was full night. The flame of the Primus stove threw a blue glare on the snow for a few yards around them, and beyond it they could see the long white band of the terrace tapering vaguely into the distance. Above and below was darkness.

"*Also*—" said Benner, getting slowly to his feet.

They crawled through the low sleeve-like entrances of the tents. They took off their boots and outer socks and crept into their blankets. They slept.

. . . And then presently there was a hand on Martin's shoulder and a figure crouching over him in the gloom. "It is almost five," Andreas Benner's voice was saying. "We should be starting, Herr Martin."

OUTSIDE it was still night. There was no wind, no sound or movement of any kind, and moon and stars seemed frozen into the arching blackness of the sky.

They ate their breakfast huddled about the blue flame of the Primus stove, holding the warm tin cups tightly in their mittened hands. By the time they finished, the night had begun to thin. Faces emerged from the darkness that had hidden them. Martin's eyes went to Radcliffe, then to Delambre, but he could discern nothing beneath the grayish masks of their features.

They started obliquely upward across the long slope of the terrace. Coming presently to the crest of a low rise, they stopped. To their right, soaring up out of the terrace, was the upper continuation of the southeast ridge; an immense serrated buttress, part vertical, part overhanging, sealing together the converging precipices of the south and east faces, and unclimbable. To its left, directly above them, were sheer cliff-walls, also unclimbable. And beyond them The Funnel—a great gash in the mountainside, the shape of an inverted funnel. Flaring out at its base in a broad, boulder-choked gully, it tapered and steepened until it was merely a deep, narrow cleft continuing up along the granite walls as far as the eye could see. It might come out on the ridge two thousand feet above; or on the upper terrace of the face; or simply peter out into smooth cliffs below the terrace. There was no way of telling until they got there.

Provided they *could* get there. . . .

And now they were climbing again, slowly, one behind the other, up the long rippling snow-slope of the terrace, and the snow was dropping away behind, and there was rock ahead and rock under their feet and rock above, growing always closer and steeper and taller, as the mountainside seemed to swing slowly and gently outward over their heads. And when, presently, they stopped to rest on a narrow shelf they estimated that they had come almost a third of the way up the Funnel.

As they moved upward again, the walls that rose about them were black with seeping water. Here, for the first time, the climbing was so difficult that they were able to move only one at a time. Their boots scraped and slipped on ooze-covered ledges, their hands and clothing became coated with slime.

And then they were emerging onto the firm dry granite of wide-flaring walls. Finding a sunlit ledge, they rested again and scraped what they could of the mud and slime from their faces and clothing. Radcliffe had bruised a knee, and the others had cuts and abrasions. Carla took out the first-aid kit and dabbed at them with iodine and cotton. Then they sat silently, looking upward.

"It is best now that we go all together on one rope," Benner said.

Hein looked at him in surprise. "But it will go much slower."

"A little slower, perhaps. But safer too."

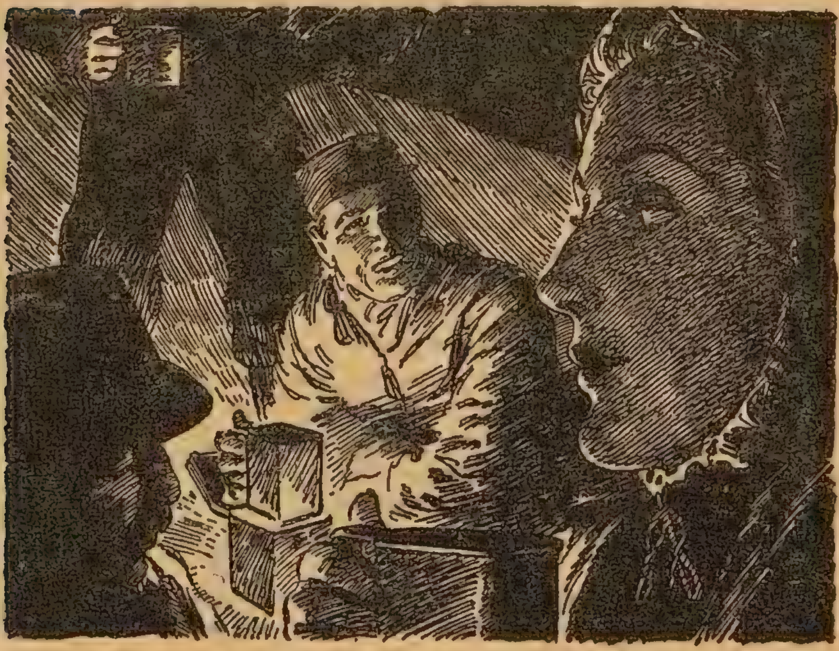
Martin watched the two curiously. Andreas doesn't trust him, he thought. He's afraid he'll take too many chances leading a rope on his own.

Removing their nailed boots, they put on their light rope and canvas espadrilles and tied themselves at even intervals onto a two-hundred-foot rope. Benner took the first position, Hein second and Delambre third. Then came Radcliffe, Carla and Ordway, in that order.

"We will climb now only one person at a time," the guide said, looking soberly from one to another. "And no one should move until the one above him is in a good position and belaying the rope."

They crept upward as a caterpillar creeps, in articulated, separately moving sections, joined together only by an occasional glimpse or shout and by the vibrating, almost sentient spinal cord of the rope.

Presently they stood together on a curving ledge between mountainside and space, in a niche cut into the sheer rock-face of the Funnel. In front was space—and themselves. On the other three sides walls leapt upward on great arcs which curved gradually inward until they met in a dark, dome-like apex perhaps fifty feet above and in almost a direct line over their heads. The only possible route of further ascent lay at the far corner, where the right-hand wall joined the outer face of the precipice. If a man could get high enough up on this corner, he might—just might—be able to reach up and around beyond the arch and, finding a hold, to pull himself back from the cliff-face onto the roof of the dome.



Andreas climbed slowly to the corner. His body arched backward into space as he struggled to hoist himself over the bulge of the corner. And suddenly he slipped. For a terrible timeless instant those below heard the scraping of his shoes and clothing and saw his fingers clawing at the wall. Then, miraculously, his hand or foot or knee caught a minute projection in the rock, and held. Almost as slowly as he had climbed, he descended. His brown face was streaked with sweat and a thin film of blood showed along the line of his lips.

"There were no holds above?" Hein asked.

"Far above. But I could not reach them."

"You could not drive a piton?"

Benner shook his head. "There was no crack."

Hein unslung his pack, adjusted the rope about his waist and approached the wall. "I am going to climb it."

His movements were as cautious and deliberate as Benner's had been. He worked his way up to the highest point Benner had reached, and the curved eaves of the overhanging dome were a scant two arms' lengths above him.

He hoisted himself up another foot. And then he lunged—arched backward, reached his arms high, seemed to give a mighty jerk. His hands caught onto something above, pulled him up, swung him outward. For a moment the whole length of his twisting body hung suspended in space; then his arms pulled him up again, over the rim of the dome, the rope moving steadily upward after him.

Benner uncoiled the rope from around the rock-belay and his own body and tied it on again around his chest. This time he ascended more steadily and rapidly than before. His body swung out against the sky, supported not by the rope but by the grip of his own hands, and disappeared onto the roof above. Then the loose end of the rope appeared over the rim of the dome and snaked downward along the wall to the recess floor.

"Komm!" Benner called.

Delambre stepped forward. "It is my turn."

As he made his final straining lunge for the rim above, Martin Ordway could see the rope tightening about his chest and dragging him inward and upward.

"Now the packs," Benner's voice echoed faintly.

When everything was up Radcliffe followed, creeping like an immense ungainly spider. His foot slipped, caught and held him. Slipped again. Held fast again. And now at last he was at the top of the corner. He swung up and out . . . now he was motionless, hanging. . . .

"I'm done," he said. And in the same instant he fell and hung suspended from the end of the rope, revolving slowly in the air.

And then the rope began to pull Radcliffe slowly upward. But suddenly it was wedged into a deep crevice at the very lip of the cornice. The men above hauled in on it with all their strength. But it did not budge.

Martin Ordway took a sudden step toward the wall.

"Martin!" Carla's voice was sharp. "What are you going to do?"

"I'm going up."

"But you can't possibly reach him."

"I can try."

Siegfried Hein's head and shoulders moved slowly out against the sky beyond the rim of the dome.

"The rope's jammed," Martin called. "Can you see it?"

Hein seemed to be nodding. He was on the very brink of the cornice now, with his hands reaching down onto the receding wall, and for a minute or more he struggled silently with the rope in the crevice below.

"He can't free it," Carla said.

Hein pulled himself back behind the rim, reappeared in a slightly different position and tried again, withdrew. Radcliffe revolved slowly on his rope. Hein moved into view again. The whole upper half of his body projected out beyond the rim and arched slowly downward. Whether it was a second rope or merely a hidden toehold that kept him from plunging on into space Martin could not tell. His arms were moving slowly downward along the rope, and Radcliffe's were moving slowly up. Suddenly their hands locked. Hein was pulling. Presently Radcliffe had passed the crevice into which the rope had wedged, and the rope was free and pulling strongly. An instant later he and Hein had disappeared from view.

Then the rope came down. . . .

And there was Carla climbing . . . and then Martin's eyes were closed, his heart pounding . . . and when he looked upward at last Carla was gone.

The rope descending again . . . there was the last thrust, the swing, the slip . . . and gray space revolving behind him . . . there was Siegfried Hein's hand reaching out to him and Hein's cool, gray eyes on his face.

"Sieg Heil, Herr Kapitan," the German said, smiling.

FOR perhaps fifteen minutes they had rested. And now at last they had risen, slung on the packs. All except Radcliffe . . .

"We ought to get going, Nick," Martin said.

"Yes," Radcliffe said. "You must get going. And I'll get going down." He turned away suddenly.

"But, Nick—"

Radcliffe turned back to him. "I've funked it, old boy, and you know it."

"Funked it? Ridiculous." Martin looked at Benner, then at the others, then back at Radcliffe.

"Oh no, Nick!" Carla cried suddenly. "You mustn't do this!"

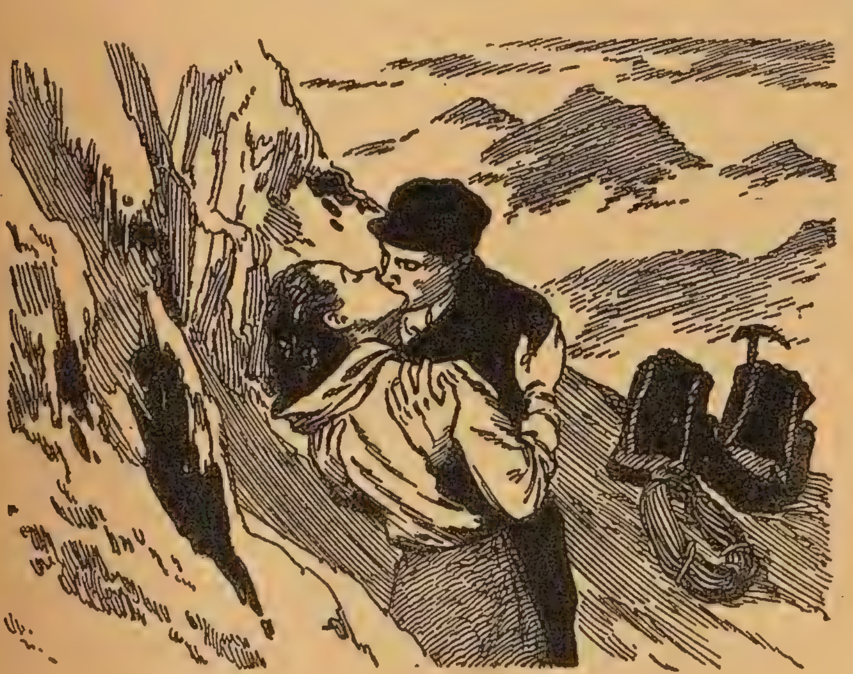
"You want to get to the top, don't you?" Radcliffe asked quietly. "And don't you realize by now that you'll never get there with me? Isn't that true, Andreas?"

The guide hesitated.

"Yes, it is true," Siegfried Hein said suddenly. "You are right, Herr Radcliffe—you will not make the top. Far better you understand it now than later."

Carla broke in angrily. "You haven't any right—"

"On the contrary, my dear," Radcliffe said gently, "Mr. Hein has a perfect right. A few minutes ago he risked his life to pull me up onto this rock. It would only be a question of time before he or the rest of you would have to get me out of some new difficulty."



"But you can't stay here," Martin said.

"No. I can go back to the tent on the terrace and wait for you there. You can let me down into the recess on one of the ropes. Below, if I take it slowly, I shan't have any trouble."

"But," Carla protested, "it will be three more days, perhaps four—"

Radcliffe interrupted. "I'm used to being alone in the mountains, after all. I shall have my rock specimens to collect; and I shall have a five-course victory dinner to prepare for your return." The girl looked at him, tears in her eyes. He turned to Benner. "All right, Andreas, if you'll be good enough to let me down now—"

"I am coming with you, *Herr Doktor*," the guide said, beginning to uncoil the rope. "It is now a little after twelve. The four of you will wait and rest, and I will be back by three."

"I won't hear of it," said Radcliffe.

"I am sorry, *Herr Doktor*, but in this I must insist. A guide of Kandermatt does not leave one of his *Herren* to go down a great mountain alone. Such a thing I will not have." He was adamant.

For a while, leaning out over the cornice, the others could see the two tiny figures moving down the wall of the Funnel. One of them seemed to turn and wave. Then they disappeared.

Hein got to his feet. "Shall we be starting now?"

Martin looked at him in surprise. "But we're going to wait here for Andreas."

"That is senseless. We will lose the best hours of the day. We can leave a note and mark our route as we go. Also, we will leave one of the packs with a tent and food, in case he does not catch up with us tonight."

He looked from Martin to Carla, then back to Martin again. The latter shook his head.

"Have you any objections then if I go alone? Surely you do not believe that on a mountain, any more than in war, the weaker should be permitted to pull down the stronger?"

Martin looked at Hein curiously. "Are we talking about the war now, or about climbing a mountain?"

"About both. And I do not think you will find so great a difference between the two by the time we are through with the Weissturm, and it with us."

"Do as you like," Martin said. "I'm not running this show any more than anyone else."

Delambre rose. "I shall go too," he said.

The German eyed him in surprise.

"If you do not object. Nor the others." Delambre's whole body seemed to go suddenly tense. "I agree with you. To climb such a mountain, one must push on."

"As you say, then," said Hein.

And then they too were gone.

Martin sat thinking. He looked up and down, and there was rock and space. He looked around him. There was an island in the sky. Everything else was remote and insubstantial beyond the blue sea of air—in that half-remembered other world where war was, and Ted and Harry and Bix. . . .

There was a girl beside him, watching him. "What is the matter, Martin?" she asked.

"Nothing," he said.

"What is it that you want?"

He reached out his hand and ran a finger downward around the line of her ear, along her throat and up to her cheek and across the mouth. And then he was holding her very closely and tightly to him and kissing the soft warmness of her lips.

When he let her go and looked at her his eyes were smiling. "It's nice to see you again," he said.

"You have seen me all the time the last few days."

"But not the right parts of you. All I see when we're climbing are your backside and the nails of your boots."

"Oh. And those parts do not please you?"

"They please me very much—especially those lovely nails. But I get a little tired of them after a while. I want to dance with you."

"We are dancing now."

"I want to marry you, Carla." He bent and covered her mouth with his. He drew her to him, gently at first, then strongly and tightly, and still more strongly and tightly. And then he raised his head and looked down at her, and smiled and said, "Hello, Carla, my wife."

"Hello, Martin, my husband."

Her eyes smiled back at him and then closed, and she lay still, and he sat holding her in the stillness.

THREE o'clock came; a quarter past three; half past. Creeping to the rim of the ledge, Martin peered downward again.

"He's coming!" he called to Carla.

"I am sorry, Herr Martin—" Benner began, when presently he was sitting beside them.

"You can talk in a minute," Carla interrupted. "First there are more important things." She handed him tea.

Benner sipped it slowly. He held the canteen in both hands and his massive chest was rising and falling in deep, slow breaths. "I am sorry—" he began again.

"The hell with that," Martin said. "How did it go?"

"It went all right. But slow." He stopped, looking around him. "The others—where are they?"

"They've gone on," Martin said. "Hein practically insisted and Delambre wanted to string along. They're to wait for us either on the upper terrace or the ridge."

"So?" Benner was silent a moment, his square face clouded. "Herr Hein is one of the finest climbers I have seen. Still I do not like such things. A party it should stay together on a mountain like the Weissturm."

"You should eat something, Andreas," Carla said.

"Later, *danke*." Then he got to his feet.

"You should rest some more."

"I have rested enough. And besides, it is already late. We must be out of the Funnel before dark." His gaze moved slowly outward to the long vapor-trails that streaked the sky and the pale westering disc of the sun.

"Not good," said Martin.

"No, it is not good."

"The wind's from the west now, and stronger."

"*Ja.*" The guide shrugged. "Sometimes I have seen it like this, and it is all clear again by evening. Sometimes it is a little squall or a snow flurry—"

"And sometimes it's a storm."

It was not a question, but a statement, and Benner did not answer. "In any case," Martin continued, "there's nothing to do but go on."

And now, presently, the Funnel began to grow narrower and deeper again. There was no wind in it—only the sound of the wind—but a gray tide of coldness seemed to be pouring down along the walls from its upper reaches.

In the middle of a particularly ugly, almost holdless pitch Martin became aware of Carla calling down to him and pointing. Ahead he saw the steel head of a piton protruding from the rock. He reached for it, grasped it, pulled himself up. There had been no sound of hammering. The piton was not Benner's, but Hein's. Thirty feet higher up there was another, and beyond that a third. The rock-walls sloped sharply to the left, and they came out on a broad, almost level platform.

"The upper terrace," said Martin.

Benner nodded. His eyes moved slowly up the sloping walls. Suddenly they stopped, and, following his gaze, Martin saw five or six loose stones piled on a level shelf about a third of the way up the right-hand wall.

It was no longer a question of climbing, but simply of scrambling up over gently sloping slabs, and they went one directly behind another, holding the slack of the rope in coils over their arms. But now they felt, as well as heard, the wind. A sudden bitter gust swooped down, caught Martin's pack sidewise and almost threw him from his feet. He caught and steadied himself just in time for a second and a third. The sound above them was a thin vibrating scream. Like a Focke-Wulff diving, Martin thought. Like a whole damned skyful of Focke-Wulffs. . . .

The Funnel itself was beneath them, and on either side the precipices of the east face fell away, sheer and unbroken, into space. There was snow underfoot and snow up ahead, too hard for footprints.

IN a small hollow in the snow they sat down close together, staring out into the scudding dusk. It was nearly six.

"At this height there will still be a little light until after seven," the guide said. "If the wind does not get any stronger we may be all right. In any case, we should be going now."

They drank a mouthful of tea apiece, put on their woolen helmets and extra sweaters and loosened the ice axes from the webbing of their packs. The wind lashed at them as they came up out of the hollow. Separating, they moved slowly up and down at rope's length from one another, searching for a trail. Carla found it: a clearly visible chain of minute, evenly-spaced holes.

"Gut," said Benner, nodding. "Their axes."

The sharp outward tilt of the ramp and the hard-packed surface made it necessary for them to proceed with great caution. Fortunately the wind was coming mostly from behind them, or they would scarcely have been able to advance at all; but the very momentum that it gave them added to the difficulties of balance and the danger of a slip.

"It is getting more icy," the guide called.

Clinging to the steep tilt of the ramp, they got out their spiked climbing-irons and strapped them to their boots. The sky was much darker now—it was seven o'clock—and the ridge ahead rose up against it like a black headland into the sea.

"We can't make it before night," Martin said to Benner.

The guide shook his head. "There is nothing to do but go on. We cannot camp here."

"It should not be more than another hour," Carla said.

Martin turned and looked down at her. He saw her eyes smile up at him. Bending, he touched his cold nose to hers. "Hello, baby," he said. "Having fun?"

"Great fun, Binks."

"Also," said Andreas Benner, picking up his ax and knocking the frozen snow from the rope.

They trudged on again. The wind howled. It grew still darker. Then it was night. The last hundred yards of the ramp was no more than a slanting ten-foot shelf between the mountain walls and space. Hugging its inner margin, however, they ascended it and came up off the ice onto a dark, spreading slope of boulders and shale. Here they stopped briefly to remove their crampons, and Benner brought out his torch and flashed it upward. They waited, but there was no answer. Then they climbed on up.

And then suddenly a slender beam slanted down at them and vanished. Benner snapped on his own torch, flashed it upward, and after a moment the light above reappeared. Then they were scrambling straight up toward it. They heard a faint shout, saw an arm waving. Threading a narrow cleft between two black shouldering ramparts, they came down into a sheltered hollow beside Siegfried Hein and Paul Delambre.

"You are all three all right?" asked Hein.

"Ja," Benner said. "And you?"

"All right too. A little cold and stiff perhaps. We have been waiting here almost three hours." Hein looked from one to another. "Before it was dark I climbed up to the ridge and looked around. It is still another thousand feet—maybe more—to where it meets the main east ridge. If we do not get at least that far tonight, there will be no chance of making the top tomorrow."

"Then we will make it the next day," said Benner. "It is no good now for climbing in the dark."

"Are you telling me that in thirty years as a guide you have never climbed on a windy night? In two hours, by eleven at the most, we can be where the ridges meet."

"Or lying six thousand feet down on the glacier," said Benner.

"Nonsense! I have looked at the ridge, I tell you. There is no difficulty or danger."

"There is always danger on a mountain when a party is tired."

"Tired? Oh, so that is it, then? When one is tired on a mountain one sits down. When one is tired in a war one surrenders. . . ."

The wind rose to a sudden shriek and a gust of icy air struck down, circling, into the hollow. Hein and Benner had half risen.

"And you, Ordway?" Hein asked. "You are tired too?"

Martin Ordway peered up into the night and the wind. "How do the rest of you feel about it?"

No one answered.

"Well, Andreas—" Martin said.

Benner shook his head. "For almost thirty years I have been a guide in the Oberland, and for a hundred years my father and grandfather before me. My father was killed on the Weissturm. Like Herr Hein here, I have said to myself since I was a boy: 'You will climb this mountain.' But not foolishly. Not to risk the lives of my *Herren* so that I may stand at last on a point of snow in the sky and shout, 'Look, *du lieber Gott:* I have done it!' "

"And as a professional guide you refuse to go on tonight?"

"Ja, Herr Martin. I refuse."

"All right," said Martin. "That's that."

THERE was fog everywhere—a great pall of it filling the hollow and rising in gray, frozen billows up the mountainside beyond. The tents, the surrounding rocks, the figure of Carla getting breakfast on the Primus between the tents were the merest blurred shadows. Presently they all stood eating and drinking in silence.

Martin was suddenly aware that Delambre had not joined them, and went to the tent to get him. When he came out, Benner and Hein were crouched in the mist where the stove had been, lashing foodstuffs and utensils onto the packboards.

"Something's the matter with Paul," Martin said.

Benner rose. "He is sick?"

Hein burst out suddenly, "Damn it, there is always something the matter with these idiots and weaklings. . ."

"Shut up!" Martin snapped. "I've had just about enough of your—"

"Do not upset yourselves, messieurs," a quiet voice said behind them. Delambre was standing a few yards away. "I am not going to hold you back from your mountaintop." He sat down abruptly on the flat shelf of a boulder and buried his face in his hands.

At the same moment Carla appeared in the tent entrance and came quickly toward them. "Martin," she began—

Delambre raised his head and looked at her. "It is not necessary for you to tell them, *ma petite*. I am drunk. Very, very drunk."

Ordway's eyes went to Carla, and she said, "I looked in the rucksack for the bottles. They weren't there."

Delambre reached out toward her and said, "Give me your hand. For just a minute." Carla complied silently. "Thank you, *ma petite.*" His eyes were steady on her face. "It is one of my misfortunes that I am a wiser man when I am drunk than when I am sober, so listen to what I have to say. . . . Whether or not I climb this mountain means nothing. But that you and your Martin climb it—that is everything. Not simply because it is a mountain, but because you are what you are and this is a thing that you must do. You know the kind of man I am now. I should not have come with you. You owe me nothing but anger and contempt. But there is one thing only that you cannot do, and that is to let me keep you from climbing this mountain. That you cannot do to me—or to yourselves. You will go—please?"

Carla looked at Martin and Benner. There was a long silence before her eyes went back to Delambre.

"All right, Paul," she said. "We will go."

THEY finished loading packboards and rucksacks. Presently Delambre came from the tent and sat on a flat stone, watching them. Benner walked slowly over and squatted down beside him. "Herr Delambre," he said, "today we will go only a short way up the ridge for our last camp. Tomorrow, if the weather is good, we will try for the top. If it is bad, we will wait and either try the next day or come down. The latest we will be back here will be the day after tomorrow in the evening."

Delambre nodded.

"All that you will need we are putting in the tent. Do not leave here—for any reason. Neither to go up nor down." Benner's blue eyes searched the Frenchman's face. "You will promise me that, Herr Delambre?"

Delambre nodded again. Benner hesitated. Then he got to his feet. The others were standing beside him, ropes and packs on their shoulders and their axes in their hands.

"We will be back before you know it," Carla said.

"From the top! That is the way it must be. That is the—" Delambre faltered and stopped but his dark eyes remained fixed on the girl's face. "You are a very lovely thing," he said softly.

They stood in silence for another moment.

"Also," said Andreas Benner.

They trudged on up the great stairway. On the crest of a steep pitch they stopped. A deep, hollow moaning filled the very core of emptiness above them. The mist trembled and began to churn, and the light behind it changed from amber to a livid green. The moaning rose to a howl, the howl to a shrill, insane piping. For an instant the mist overhead thinned and parted, revealing depth beyond depth of tumultuous green twilight. Then it closed in again, thickened, surged down. Behind the mist came the ocean of the wind, and behind the wind, the snow. They crouched close together in a shallow depression between two tilted boulders.

"You're going to wait here?" Wind and snow tore the words from Martin's lips, and he repeated them, shouting.

The guide shook his head. "There is not enough protection."

"We must be getting near to where the ridges meet," Carla said.

The guide nodded. *"Ja,* it cannot be so far now."

Struggling to their feet again, they faced upward into the blast.

"I will lead if you like," said Hein.

Benner shook his head without answering and took a few steps up the ridge. "Hold the rope short," he called back, turning, "and keep the one ahead always in sight."

Martin was counting the forward thrusts of his hands. He was watching the rope—a yellow, snow-rimmed thread of twisted hemp inching tortuously up over the rocks ahead . . . into roaring emptiness; to Carla, creeping on hands and knees; to Hein; to Benner. Then a slight tremor came down the cord to him, and, raising his eyes, he saw that Carla was no longer on her hands and knees, but walking. He struggled to his feet, leaned into the wind and lurched forward. To the right and above, the enormous dark shape of the main east ridge was moving very slowly toward them out of the gray ocean of space.

Then they were together again, crouched with their backs to the wind on a great promontory of stormswept rock. Below them the two diverging ridges slanted away into the opaque depths of distance. Above, the single ridge climbed on into the wind and snow.

"I think there is a snow-slope and a big cornice up to the left," said Hein.

Facing into the storm again, they crossed the narrow platform of the promontory, clambered up over the serrated crest of the ridge and bore left and upward for perhaps fifty feet. Here there was a broad, steeply rising band of snow slanted away almost at right angles to the ridge—and at its top, dimly visible in the gloom, an immense ice-cornice curled out against the sky. Benner balanced himself carefully and tested the footing. They reached the top of the slope and began hacking their way up an ice-cleft in the cornice. They stumbled out on its summit into a small snow-filled depression between the upper rim and a dark outcropping of rock.

Benner stopped, peering around him; then he stooped close to the snow and turned his face to the wind. *"Ja,* there is a little protection," he said. "If we dig down it may be solid enough." He rose and trampled heavily toward the lip of the cornice, probing with his ax.

They cleared away a few square feet of new-fallen snow. Then, huddling in the hollow they had formed, they unstrapped their sole remaining tent. Lying prostrate on the wildly whipping canvas, they adjusted the guy ropes with stiff, fumbling fingers, and drove the steel pegs into the old, frozen snow that formed the base beneath the drifts. Pushing their packs before them, they burrowed beneath the tent and groped for the two poles.

"Also," said Benner, his voice a hoarse whisper in the darkness. "Very slow and careful now."

He and Carla took one pole, Ordway and Hein the other. They began to raise them. The slender wood swayed and trembled, and the tent billowed suddenly out with a savage lunge. But their grip held. Wood and canvas held. They strained at the poles until they were vertical, swivelled their pointed ends deep into the snow and weighted the bottoms of the walls with the packs and axes.

"Better to keep holding on for a while," Benner said.

They crouched motionless in their pocket of darkness, two of them gripping each pole with both hands. The snow battered against the canvas. The wind howled.

IT was day, and night, and then day again. The storm still roared about the tent. They slept in two-hour shifts, two of them rolling up in the blankets against the walls while the others sat guard over tent-poles, guy-ropes and canvas. Martin and Carla slept first, and each time the former was awakened by Benner the guide whispered, "I will watch with you, Herr Martin. We will let her sleep." But always Carla woke by herself and insisted, over their protests, on taking her turn. She sat quietly beside Martin, her head on his shoulder.

At evening of the second day the storm had stopped. As they ate their supper of stew and tea, the unaccustomed stillness of the night outside seemed to be pressing in against the canvas walls like a tangible weight.

Benner spoke suddenly. "As soon as it is light I will start down to Herr Delambre."

"No," said Hein. "If we go down now we will never get back again."

"Herr Hein, I said that *I* would go down."

"Alone?"

"Ja—alone." The guide was looking at Martin Ordway. "The new snow will not yet be frozen tomorrow, and it will not be good for four people to be climbing together over the narrow places on the ridge. It will take me only three hours—maybe four. If Herr Delambre is all right I will come back in the afternoon, either with him, if he wants to come, or alone again, if he does not, and the next day we will make the try for the summit. If he is not all right I will stay down there, and the next morning the three of you will come down."

"Without even trying for the top?" said Hein.

"If Herr Delambre is not all right, the most important thing is that we get him down off the mountain as quickly as possible."

The snow had already begun to freeze an hour later.

IN the tent Carla was preparing supper. Hein sat polishing his ax-blade. Martin came in and Carla saw that he had been using the binoculars. He sat down where he had been before. After a few minutes the canvas of the roof began slowly to change color. The sun was gone.

"The snow is good," Hein said. "By daylight tomorrow it will be all right for any sort of climbing."

"We should be able to get down in three or four hours," said Carla.

"Down? I am talking about up, *Fräulein.*"

Here it is, Martin Ordway thought. "No," he said.

"You do not really believe that I am going to go down, do you, *Herr Kapitan?* I could have told you from the beginning that these others could not climb such a mountain as this."

"It's not a question now of whether or not they can climb it. Andreas hasn't come back and that means they are probably in trouble."

Hein shrugged a little. "It is possible, but not likely. Believe me, I am not being more indifferent than you, but only more sensible."

"Look, Hein—" Martin spoke very slowly. "Do you think it will be easy for Fräulein Dehn and me to turn back now? To come so close to this thing we've been wanting all our lives, and then lose it? But we've no choice. It's better to be beaten than to. . . ."

"No, it is not better to be beaten. And this is one time, *Herr Kapitan,* when I do not intend to be beaten."

After a while Hein got up and went outside.

"Carla—" Martin said. "What would you do?"

It was a moment before she answered, "I would go down to the others, and let Hein go on alone."

Presently Hein returned, lay down and wrapped himself in his blankets. Carla lay down also, and soon Martin slept too.

When he woke he lay with eyes open in the darkness. A few feet away he could see the huddled shape that was Carla. Turning, he looked at the other side of him. Then he groped for his flashlight and snapped on the beam.

Hein was not there.

Pulling on his helmet and the wind-breaker he had been using as a pillow, Martin crept across the tent floor and out. The night seemed almost to strike at him with its black brilliance of snow and stars. There was no wind, no cloud, no sound or movement. On the far side of the tent the white mountain wall plunged steeply away into space. In front of it were the trampled drifts of the hollow, with the ropes and rucksacks dark against the snow. Beyond was a trail of footprints, leading upward.

Martin crawled back into the gloom of the tent. Carla was still asleep. He squatted on his blankets and sat for several minutes watching her. Twice he reached his hand out toward her shoulder, but each time he stopped himself before he touched her. He sat motionless in the cold darkness, struggling to think.

Then suddenly, very quietly and quickly, he was making ready, cautiously assembling the few things he would need. You should eat something now, he thought. But his body did not want food. What it wanted was something hot to drink. But if he lit the stove it would awaken Carla. Creeping from the tent again, he forced himself to eat two crackers and washed them down with water from the canteen.

Crawling back into the tent, he found a scrap of paper and pencil and sat down again on the blankets, flashlight in hand.

Hein gone for top, he wrote. *Going after. Back tonight. In case*—he rubbed out those last two words. *We are climbing together. Remember that—together. I love you, Carla. M.* He looked at his watch and wrote the time—4:45—at the top of the sheet. Then he laid it on the blankets, and weighted it with the pencil. For a few moments he sat looking at Carla, his body and brain one great aching hollowness of wanting and loving.

THEN the close, still sanctuary of the tent was gone. Carla was gone. Everything that had been was gone. There was only the snow and the stars and a mountain rising into space. He plodded on. The minutes slipped past. The mountainside slipped past. . . .

There was the slope and the crest, and the next slope and the next crest, the slope and the crest beyond. There was the smooth, ice-veined wall of the Citadel rising sheer into the sky. There was a ramp of snow curving around the wall to the right, narrowing and steepening. And then there was Siegfried Hein standing beyond the next bend in the ramp and turning and looking at him.

Martin stopped. You must think clearly now, he thought. His eyes moved over the muffled figure, over the torn boots and the great jagged rents at the knees and elbows, and back to the burned, stubbled face and the gray eyes.

Hein watched him. "You will excuse me if I go on now?" he said presently.

"I'm going to the top too."

Hein shrugged. "That is up to you. However, *Herr Kapitan,* do not waste your time trying to climb the rock."

Martin's gaze moved slowly upward over the vertical ice-sheathed wall of the Citadel. "It's the same all around?" he asked.

"Yes. I have reconnoitered it and made a start in two or three places; but it is unclimbable. I was not even able to hammer in a piton for our mutual convenience."

Martin looked at him for a long moment. "And this ledge?" he asked.

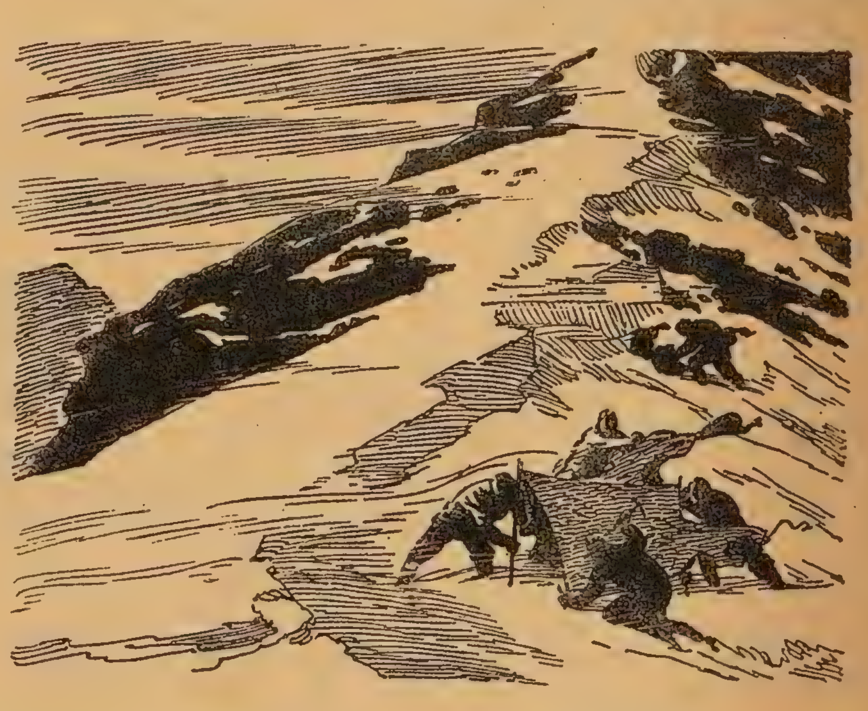
"Is the one possibility."

Martin moved forward and peered around a protruding buttress in the rock-wall along the curving flange of the ramp. Only a short pitch of precipice remained above them—twenty vertical feet, perhaps—with the ramp cutting diagonally upward across its face. It was far narrower and steeper than the section on which they stood—a mere ribbon of snow clinging to the mountainside. But it extended in an unbroken path to the top of the Citadel and ended in a broad, jutting platform of rock.

Martin turned back to Hein. "Let's go, then."

He took another step forward, but stopped suddenly when he saw that the other had not moved. Hein said quietly, "If you would take the trouble, as I did, to study the ledge from various angles, you would perhaps notice something that will change your mind."

Martin pressed himself in against the precipice wall



and stared upward. Then he crouched and leaned outward. Digging his fingers and toes into the snow, he inched the upper part of his body out over the rim of the ledge until he could see what lay beyond and beneath it. He saw what Hein had meant. The section of the ramp on which they stood was, in effect, the sloping top of a bulge in the cliffs below, and the snow that covered it rested on a firm, if narrow, base of solid rock. But directly ahead, where the ramp steepened across the final pitch, the bulge no longer existed. The ribbon of snow that formed its surface was not a covering over rock beneath, but merely a cornice or unsupported platform, clinging of its own adhesiveness to the face of the precipice. Below it was eight thousand feet of air.

Martin stood up slowly. "It wouldn't hold a man."

"No, it would not hold a man." The gray eyes were mocking. "Then if you will let me by, *Herr Kapitan*—" Hein moved past him "—I shall be starting now."

"But how can you? Which way?"

"You have heard of a hand traverse, perhaps?"

"Yes, but—" Martin broke off abruptly, his eyes following Hein's. He saw that there was a crack in the smooth surface of the rock. Beginning not more than two yards ahead of where they stood, it slanted upward across the precipice, roughly parallel to the snow-ramp and about five feet above it, and ended where the ramp ended, at the base of the jutting platform above. It was far too narrow and shallow to hold a booted foot, but its lower lip seemed to curl upward, and outward just enough to support the grasp of a man's tightly curved fingers. Martin's eyes went back to Hein.

"It's at least forty feet and a thirty-degree angle. But you think you can make it?"

"Yes. I think I can make it."

Martin unslung his rope from his shoulder. "All right," he said. "Shall we go?"

The German shook his head. "I am going alone. Whether you try to follow me or not is your own affair, although having seen your attempts at climbing I would advise most strongly against it. But I am afraid I have finished with dragging you and your companions to the top of the Weissturm."

"I am not asking you to help me," Martin said quietly. "I'm suggesting that we help each other."

"You are under the impression that I need your help?"

"As much as I need yours." Martin held out the rope. "Here. Tie it on."

Hein did not move.

"Tie it on I say! We've come this far together, Hein. Let's finish it together. . . ."

The German stared at him, his eyes cold and hard. "No," he said. "I will finish it alone, and you will not finish it at all. I am strong and you are weak. I have the courage and the skill and the will to do it, and you have not. I am a German climbing for Germany, and you are not climbing for anything, but only running away."

SIEGFRIED HEIN approached the lower end of the unsupported snow-ramp, studied the slanting crack in the rock above, and, grasping its lower lip with the fingers of both hands, swung himself out onto the face of the precipice. He pulled himself across and upward. His right hand slid forward, gripped and pulled. Then his body moved after it as the left hand slipped forward too. After each five or six swings he rested a moment. Presently he was halfway to the rock platform above—two-thirds of the way.

Suddenly, with a sharp crack the lip of the crevice to which Hein was clinging broke under his hands. There was the scratch of his bootnails against the rock and his fingers clawing at the wall. Then he was no longer clinging to the wall but standing on the unsupported snow-ramp below. The snow trembled, seemed for a moment to be buckling under his weight . . . and held.

"Can you get back on the wall?" Martin called.

The German did not answer. Very slowly and cautiously, without moving his feet, he raised his arms and groped upward to the right along the rock-wall. Apparently he could find no hold. Lowering his arms, he stood staring down at the snow, carefully shifting his weight and advancing one foot, inch by inch, in front of the other. He took one step, then a second. In the next instant the snow directly in front of him disappeared. In the spot where he had been about to set his foot there was now revealed the blue sea of air that washed the eight-thousand-foot north face of the Weissturm.

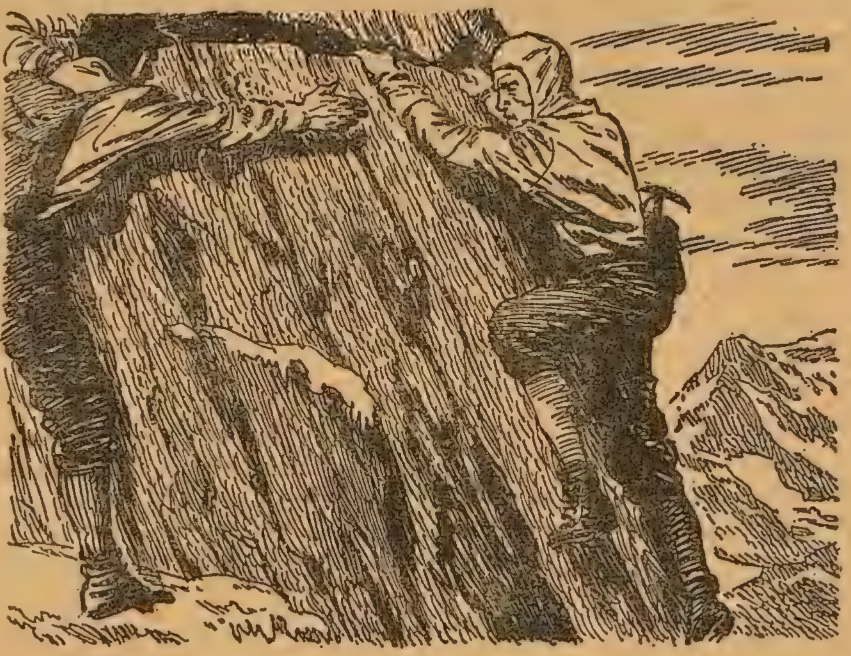
Martin shut his eyes, but only for a second, and when he opened them Hein was still miraculously there.

"Don't move!" he heard his voice calling. "Don't move an inch!"

Without having thought it or willed it, he himself had unslung his pack and dropped his ax and rope; he was edging toward the snow-ramp, grasping the crack above it, swinging himself out onto the precipice beyond. . . .

He kept his face to the mountainside and his eyes on the rock creeping past them. He reached, gripped, pulled, reached again. He clung motionless to the lip of the crack, counted ten and swung on again. When at last he turned and looked ahead he was ten or twelve feet from the point where Hein stood. When he turned for the second time he was almost within arm's reach of him.

Directly ahead was the section of the crack from which the lip had broken away. Slanting diagonally upward above the German's head, it was the merest fold in the vertical rocks, shorn clean of all roughnesses on which a hand or finger could secure a grip. It was a yard across perhaps, and beyond it the crack was deep and flanged again, cutting upward to the summit of the rock-wall and the jutting platform above. But the point at which the lip began was still a foot or more beyond Hein's grasp, and between him and its granite safety was the jagged hole in the snow-ramp and blue depths of space.



Martin's eyes moved back to Hein and from Hein to the point in the lower section of the crack to which he himself was clinging. Here, too, there was a distance of perhaps a foot between the German's farthest possible grasp and the nearest projection of the lip. But on the far side there was only one man's reach to bridge the gap, and on this side there were two.

"The crack's strong enough here to hold the two of us," Martin said quietly. "I'm going to reach out my hand. Don't move until you're sure you have a grip on it. When I pull, jump."

He shifted his left hand to the securest grip he could find and jammed his elbow deep into the crack. Then he swivelled slowly and extended his right hand until it was within two feet of Hein's shoulders.

"Take it," he said.

Hein did not move.

"Take it!"

The German stood, motionless and silent. For one flashing, timeless instant Martin looked into a man's eyes, and everything that the man was was there: the frustration and bitterness and contumacy; the fear and the pride and the bottomless sterility of pride; the despairing lonely hunger of the unloving and unloved; the will to conquer and the will to die. . . .

And then he saw Hein turning away from him, advancing one foot slowly in front of the other, reaching out with both arms toward the upper section of the crack. He saw him stop and crouch. He saw him leap toward the rock-wall, hit it, grasp it, cling to it, claw at it, slip from it, fall slowly backward from it onto the snow-ramp.

Hein did not seem to hit the snow. He simply disappeared through it, soundlessly. In the same instant the ramp itself was gone.

Martin Ordway hung from the crack and stared dully at the wall of rock from which the snow had broken away. Along the line where the concealing snow had joined the mountainside there was now revealed a narrow but solid flange of granite, banding the smooth face of the Citadel. He lowered himself to it, edged along it, grasped the lip of the crack on the far side, pulled himself forward and upward. . . .

And then suddenly there was the platform rushing up and hitting him in the knees and thighs and chest and face and the dull stab of a rough surface against his cheekbone and the thin sound of his goggles splintering on the rock. For a few moments he lay where he had fallen. Then he sat up again; stood up again.

It is only another few hundred feet, he thought.

He began to climb. He climbed on through the stillness above the wind. He fell, struggled up again, stumbled on. He came out onto the second ridge and clung with bootnail and fingertip to its smooth shingles of ice. His eyes moved slowly upward—and in the next instant he saw nothing. The mountain top struck suddenly down at him with an intolerable, blinding whiteness of sun and snow. He groped for his goggles, but they were gone.

He lurched forward again. He kicked and hacked and clawed and stumbled, with his head bent forward and his eyes closed to slits. He felt a cold empty torpor rising in a slow tide through his body and mind. He felt the last of the tiny deep fire that was within him flickering and fading and seeping away into the monstrous, encompassing nothingness of snow and sky. . . . So this is the end, he thought. This is the crest of the flight. This is the soldier's victory, the lover's consummation. This is the top of the mountain. . . .

You are a part of nothing, a voice said very distinctly at his elbow—*and you are running away.*

"No," he said. "I am climbing a mountain."

Why?

"Because it is there, of course," he said, smiling.

The voice was gone, and there was only emptiness.

"Take my hand, Carla," he said quietly. "Take it, Ted—Harry—Bix. Have you the rope, Andreas? Tie it on. Tie it on, Nick. Tie it on, Paul. . . . *Tie it on, Hein.* . . . We're all going to the top together. . . ."

THE sun was sloping away toward the ranges in the west as Andreas Benner clambered up onto the rock platform above the Citadel. Here he rested for a few minutes, and then, very slowly, he followed the wandering footprints upward. Three hundred feet below the summit of the White Tower he stopped and knelt beside the sprawled figure in the snow.

And presently. . . . "Careful now," Benner's voice came to Martin, "there is a little steep place right here."

Martin felt an arm locked strong and tight around his own. They were climbing down.

Then there were the brown canvas of the tent walls, and the shadowy figures of Carla and Benner sitting on their blankets close beside him.

"It must be almost morning," Martin said.

"It is evening, Herr Martin," said Benner. "You have been sleeping all day."

Carla went to the Primus, lighted it and set a pot of water with a can of stew in it over the flame. "You must eat all you can to get strength for the morning."

"We must start down tomorrow, Herr Martin," said Benner. "There is not much food left, and if another storm should come—" He broke off, shrugging.

"I can make it," Martin said.

"Also, the message from Interlaken about getting you out of Switzerland may have come by now, and I must make my report on Herr Hein and Herr Delambre."

"What about Delambre?" Martin asked quietly.

"On the morning I went down—you remember?—the snow was still deep and soft, and I did not get there until after twelve. Herr Delambre was not in the tent, and outside there was a line of fresh footprints leading away from it. I followed them until, looking ahead, I saw what had happened on the slope. There had been an avalanche. And the footprints stopped."

"You didn't find him?"

"No. I looked for three hours, four hours, but the snow was too deep. When I came back to the tent it was already too late to start up the ridge, so I spent the night there and came up in the morning."

"And kept right on going—after Hein and me."

"*Ja,* Herr Martin."

The Primus hummed, and the water in the pot began to boil. Martin shifted himself slowly forward onto his hands and knees and crept to the entrance of the tent.

"You should lie still and rest, Martin," Carla said. "And your food is almost ready."

"I'll be back in a minute."

Crossing to one of the empty packboards, he squatted down on it and sat looking into the glory of the night. The hollow rose to the slopes, the slopes to the ridge, the ridge to the shoulder, the shoulder to the stars.

He closed his eyes and bent his head into his hands, and when he looked up again Carla was beside him.

"Don't, Martin," she said. "Don't, my lover. . . ."

For a little while he sat motionless. Then he turned and buried his raw, burning face in the warm softness of her breast.

THE message from Interlaken had come. Christian Mehrwalder had ascended the glacier and lower ridge and delivered it to Radcliffe on the second day after the storm. As they huddled about the Primus with Radcliffe, drinking their tea, Benner read it to Martin:

Arrangements made for Friday afternoon, 10/21. Detailed instructions to follow.

Martin said nothing, but his thoughts ripped like a savage blade through the numbness that enveloped him.

Germany was cracking, crumbling. . . . Sure. But after Germany there was still the Japs. After Germany they'd send you to New Guinea or Luzon or the lovely primeval and well bulldozed island of Whachimaculla. No, the war wasn't going to last forever, but it was going to give a pretty damn good imitation of it.

Carla, Carla, Carla, he thought. . . .

THERE was a grove of trees and a shed-like structure and beyond the shed and the trees an open field. A man came out of the shed and approached the car, and Benner got out, and the two spoke together briefly. Then the man came over and shook hands with Martin Ordway.

"It will be only a few minutes," he said.

Martin and Carla got out of the car and stood under the trees while Benner and the man went inside.

"All right, now," the man said when they reappeared.

They came out from under the trees onto the field, and there before them was an expanse of smooth grass, and beyond the grass more trees, and against the trees, in the far corner of the field, the dark outline of a plane.

"You will find a helmet, glasses and jacket on the seat," the man said.

The shoulders and helmeted head of the pilot showed in the forward cockpit. He raised a gloved hand in greeting as they came up to the plane, but did not speak. They stopped. Martin looked at the man beside him.

"I hardly know how to—" he began.

The man made a deprecating gesture. "It is nothing. Some can do one thing, some another." He shook hands briefly. *Glückliche, Herr Kapitan.*"

Martin turned to Andreas Benner, felt the pressure of a thick hard hand against his own. I don't know how to tell you either, Andreas, he thought. . . .

"Watch that arthritis," he said.

"*Ja,* Herr Martin."

"And keep your boots oiled."

"*Ja.*"

"Because next time—"

"*Ja,* next time—"

The hand was gone. The brown, seamed face was gone. There was only a girl, standing slender and still, beside him.

He turned without speaking, and Carla did not speak either. Then he bent and kissed her and held her close, and she was there—her eyes, her mouth, her hair, her body were there—softness and brightness were there—and the snow and the wind and the sunlight were there—and yesterday and today and tomorrow and all of time and all of wanting and all of living, they were all there—

Because next time, he thought—

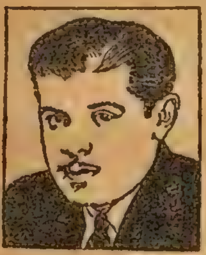
Because next time. . . .

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

MR. LINCOLN'S CAMERA MAN, by Roy Meredith, will prove a treasure-trove for camera addicts, the historically minded, and Lincoln admirers. Here are more than 400 illustrations reproduced from Brady originals. And 120 of the Civil War pictures have never been published before.


Roy Meredith

Mathew B. Brady was the official photographer of the Union Army. He hired and trained twenty assistants and covered most of the battles of the Army of the Potomac, creating an invaluable record of the War Between the States.

Before the war Brady had been an internationally known photographer who specialized in portraits of celebrities. He charged as much as $700 for a large-size daguerreotype. After the war, competition and failing eyesight ruined his career and he died in almost complete poverty, forgotten by the nation he had served.

Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y. Price $7.50.

FRANK BAKER enthusiasts will welcome **Embers,** for his previous book, Mr. Allenby Loses the Way, straddled rather bewilderingly between fantasy and polemics.

As a young man, Tom Embers had loved and lost Edna. Years later he lived with his five cats as a pensioner on the estate of the Penningtons. Judge and Alvina Pennington cherished him, worried over him, and protected him from the unimaginative of the community who called Thomas Embers crazy.

Frank Baker

Embers lived in the perpetual hope that his lost Edna would come to dinner—and then a guest arrived at the Penningtons', a Mrs. Chavasse. . . .

Maddeningly vague, but totally charming, Alvina Pennington is one of the nicest women in recent fiction. And in this age of morbid psychological novels about the insane, Tom Embers' fey madness is a blessed relief.

There is no defining the complete charm, the absolute rightness of Embers. It is an escape from reality, or perhaps an escape to it, for it would be hard to say just which Tom Embers did.

Coward-McCann, N. Y. Price $2.50.

THE HOUSE NEAR PARIS, by **Drue Tartière** in collaboration with **M. R. Werner,** tells the true story of an American woman's traffic in patriots.

Drue Tartière was left alone in occupied France when her husband was called up to serve with General de Gaulle. Mrs. Tartière elected to remain in her husband's country. Interned with other American women, she won her freedom by simulating the hemorrhages of cancer, and back again in her house outside of Paris, she bravely worked with the underground.

Simon & Schuster, N. Y. Price $2.75.

TOM POWERS' Sheba on Trampled Grass is a delightful novel of a carnival and the colorful people who belonged to it.

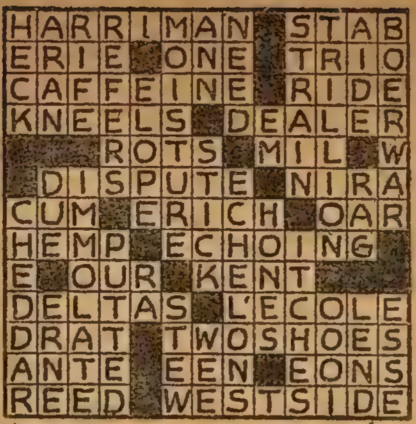
There were Unc Bevins, and Bathsheba, the beautiful star of the troupe, and Princess Bessie, who was guided by the spirits, and the villainous MacGrieff. And last, but not least, Lilly, the amorous panther.

Sheba is the story of two young men, one broken in body, the other in mind, who were healed by the kindly folk of the fabulous carnival.

The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis and N. Y. Price $2.50.

COCKEYED CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane



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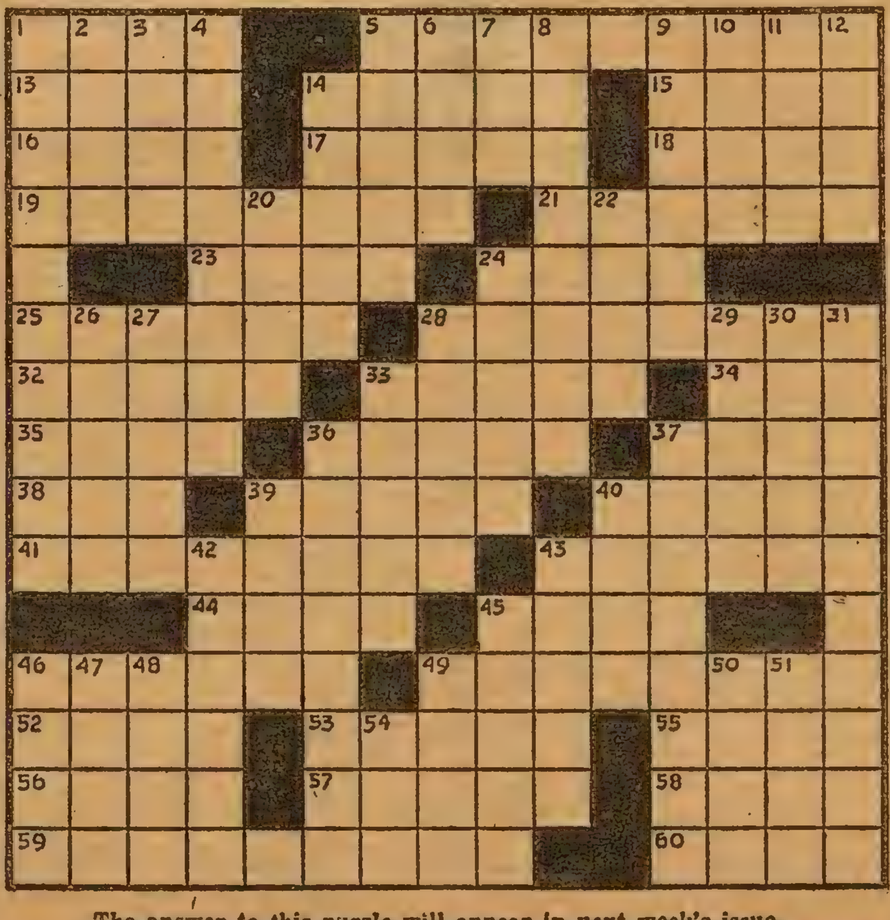
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 If properly inflated, these fix flats (abbr.)
5 Pig nurse
13 About the only thing to enjoy between wars
14 Item on the Stuck Exchange
15 —— *fixe*
16 Lost, as in the horse latitudes
17 Gets all mucked up
18 No matter how deep you dig down in it, you're always in the hole
19 You get kinda jumpy watching this
21 African device for sending messages in double talk
23 Air-cooled pants (sing.)
24 Kind of wolf
25 Fortune any gold digger will settle for
28 This's heard in the girls' dormitory after lights out
32 Raves in statements (anag.)
33 Commonest kind of cat
34 The UNO before it got mixed up
35 In children they're deplorable; in diplomacy plorable
36 The Russians have sure strung them along
37 Where they make those holes for those cheeses
38 The very last word in high-brow novels
39 Augers and other dull things
40 Urged to break out in a rash
41 What congressmen sit in (pl.)
43 French filling station
44 Doctors' necessities
45 Queer old chap
46 Harry
49 Spaghetti-snuffing Nazis
52 Quite a Ladd in Hollywood
53 Proper way to address a tree, I think
55 Three squared
56 Tibet relative of Peruvian taxi
57 Sahara soda fountains
58 What we'd like to have peace for
59 Men who pour banana oil on troubled waters
60 They can be manufactured by hand or foot

VERTICAL

1 Ethiopian men (two words)
2 You've got to hurry if you want to do this
3 It's on the safe side (naut.)
4 They have cold feet and avoid being caught in drafts
5 Its loss is felt in Wall Street
6 Boom times
7 Fight promoter
8 Things that all wise old birds cackle over on rainy days (two words)
9 Diss iss heaven for der Cherman
10 Tidy for publication
11 Where you promise to unlove, dishonor, and disobey
12 This is musical Taylor's singular first name
14 What the small fry sure did
20 What to use to seal a woman's lips
22 Super-binge
24 French soda pop (pl.)
26 Sheepish, isn't it?
27 Housing matters
28 Amounts of laughter
29 Flat on your back
30 ecareR
31 Venetian taxi drivers
33 Short A.M.s
36 Indoor stick-and-ball academy
37 First thing Stalin kicked about
39 Liver juice
40 It's got a shape like a plate
42 Wiggle of the left ear at bridge
43 Road hogs
45 Wooden legs
46 Has come out on top
47 A Turkish colm
48 How you feel after thirty-eight beers
49 What Russia extends on the hand of friendship
50 Handy goddess
51 decnef ro depooC
54 Peace Ain't Anywhere! (abbr.)



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

Clear Heads Choose Calvert
Calvert
RESERVE
Blended Whiskey

International Champion Afghan Hound... Rudiki of Prides Hill. Owner: Marion Florshe

"Looks like the boss got himself a prize, too"

NICE thing about *this* prize is—anyone can walk off with it! You just decide to treat yourself to a glorious Calvert highball, and the prize is yours!

Considering that Calvert is *the real thing* in whiskey, that's a very nice state of affairs indeed. For this wonderfully rich, mellow blend is simply beyond imitation!

How come? Well, we've blended more fine whiskey in our time than any other distiller in America. And that experience count

How about awarding *yourself* a gra prize tonight? Just be sure your highball made with Calvert.

. . . . ***It's the real thin***

Clear Heads Choose **Calvert**

Calvert
RESERVE

Calvert Distillers Corp., N.Y.C., BLENDED WHISKEY 86.8 Proof. "Reserve"—65% Grain Neutral Spirits..."Special"—72½% Grain Neutral Spirits

THE CASE OF THE PSYCHONEUROTIC TOE

Continued from Page 31

time in weeks. In some odd fashion his mind had come to regard the incident as closed.

And then the doorbell rang. With a scowl of irritation, he answered it, to find a stout well-dressed man standing, briefcase in hand, on the doorstep.

"Mr. Longmire?" the man inquired.

"Yes."

"My name is Short. I am calling in the interest of my client, Mr. Nick Nicoletti, in regard to an injury which you suffered in his place of business."

"That toe again!" Mr. Longmire ejaculated in disgust.

"Precisely. If I may have a moment of your time, there are a few papers to be signed."

Reluctantly Mr. Longmire let the lawyer enter. Mr. Short opened his briefcase and took out some papers. "This," he explained, "is simply a statement that you injured yourself on the third day of March at 3.30 P.M. in Mr. Nicoletti's restaurant. Sign here, please."

Mr. Longmire signed.

"And this," the lawyer told him, putting another paper before him, "is an affidavit testifying that Mr. Nicoletti paid for the medical attention which you required. Sign on this line, please."

Again Mr. Longmire scribbled his name.

"This," Mr. Short continued, "is a statement that you release Mr. Nicoletti from further responsibility and have fully recovered."

Mr. Longmire hesitated. "But I have *not* fully recovered," he said.

Mr. Short frowned. "Surely after three months—"

"The doctor says the toe will never fully recover," Mr. Longmire cut in. "You see, the trouble's in the joint."

"Do you mean to imply that as a result of the accident you are claiming permanent impairment of your use of the toe?"

Mr. Longmire nodded. "Precisely."

"What per cent of the toe's use have you lost?" Mr. Short demanded.

"Well, I've never really stopped to figure it out."

"But there is a loss?"

"Of course there is. Didn't I tell you—"

"But you refuse to state what per cent, is that right? You're being very difficult, Mr. Longmire. There are courts to decide these matters, you know."

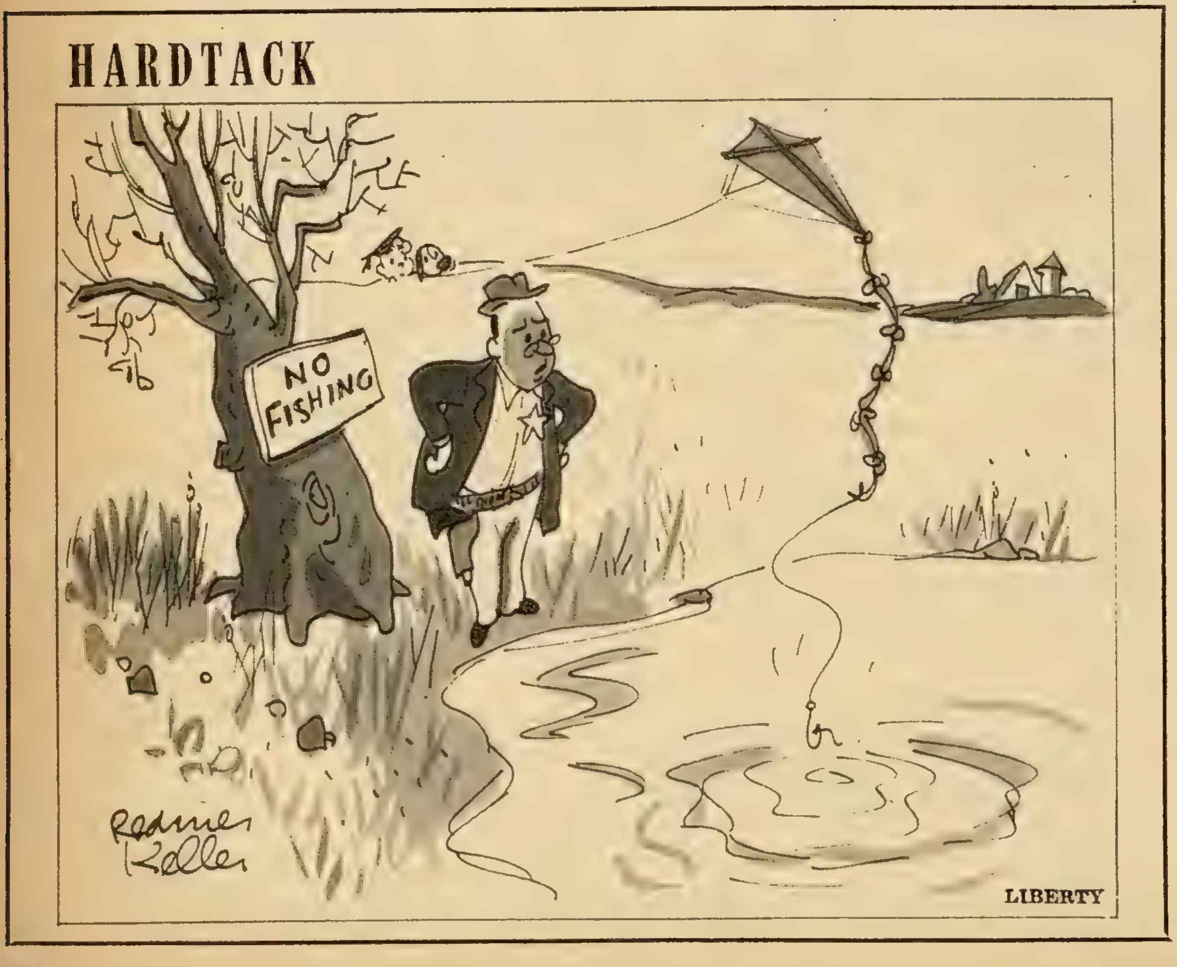
"I don't think—" Mr. Longmire began hesitantly.

"You don't think we dare carry the case into court?" Mr. Short interrupted. "That's where you're wrong. We'll fight it to the bitter end. Now, are you or are you not ready to sign this release?"

Mr. Longmire set his jaw, drew himself erect and declared, "Before I'll sign such a paper, I'll see you in—in court!"

MR. LONGMIRE'S anger cooled after the lawyer had gone and he began to regret having threatened to take his injured toe into court. As he went back to work, he decided to let the whole unpleasantness die a quiet, natural death.

But it was not to be as easy as that. His mind—which had once regarded the toe incident as closed—now began to dwell on it again. He started having odd compulsions about the toe, such as the one that made him take off his shoe in a subway train one evening and scratch the toe vigorously to relieve an unbearable imaginary itching. At night he dreamed about the toe. On one occasion he awoke from a horrible nightmare of cannibalism to find his body twisted into an excruciatingly painful knot as he tried to get the toe in his mouth.



Unable to endure this state of affairs any longer, he went to see a psychiatrist named Dr. McBridsky. Mr. Longmire related in detail the story of the injured toe, and of how his mind kept dwelling upon it. Dr. McBridsky listened with sympathy and understanding. Occasionally he uttered a significant, "Hmmm, I see."

Mr. Longmire's nightmares interested the doctor most, particularly the one from which he had awakened to find himself nibbling on his toe.

Mr. Longmire nervously lit a cigarette. "Am I going nuts?"

"I'm sure we've got your case in time," the doctor said, "and can at least arrest it, if not effect a complete cure. However, it will be necessary to make a complete psychoanalysis. That will mean a half-hour session each day."

"How long?" Mr. Longmire asked.

"Oh, several months probably. You see, we must go far back into your childhood. This sort of thing is usually very deep-seated."

"All right," he said grimly. "When do we start?"

THE psychoanalysis took six months. During this time enough autobiographical material was dredged up from Mr. Longmire's subconscious mind to fill half a dozen books (all of which undoubtedly would have been banned in Boston). At last Dr. McBridsky announced triumphantly that the riddle of the psychoneurotic toe was solved.

"It is really," he informed Mr. Longmire, "quite simple. Now listen closely. You recall we uncovered the fact that when you were two years old a certain very stern, puritanical uncle of yours visited in your home."

"Uncle Egbert," Mr. Longmire said with a nod.

"Correct. He lived by an extremely rigid code, believing that each misdeed must receive immediate and exact punishment. This supermorality was indelibly impressed on your youthful mind—that is why the matter of your toe injury upset you so badly."

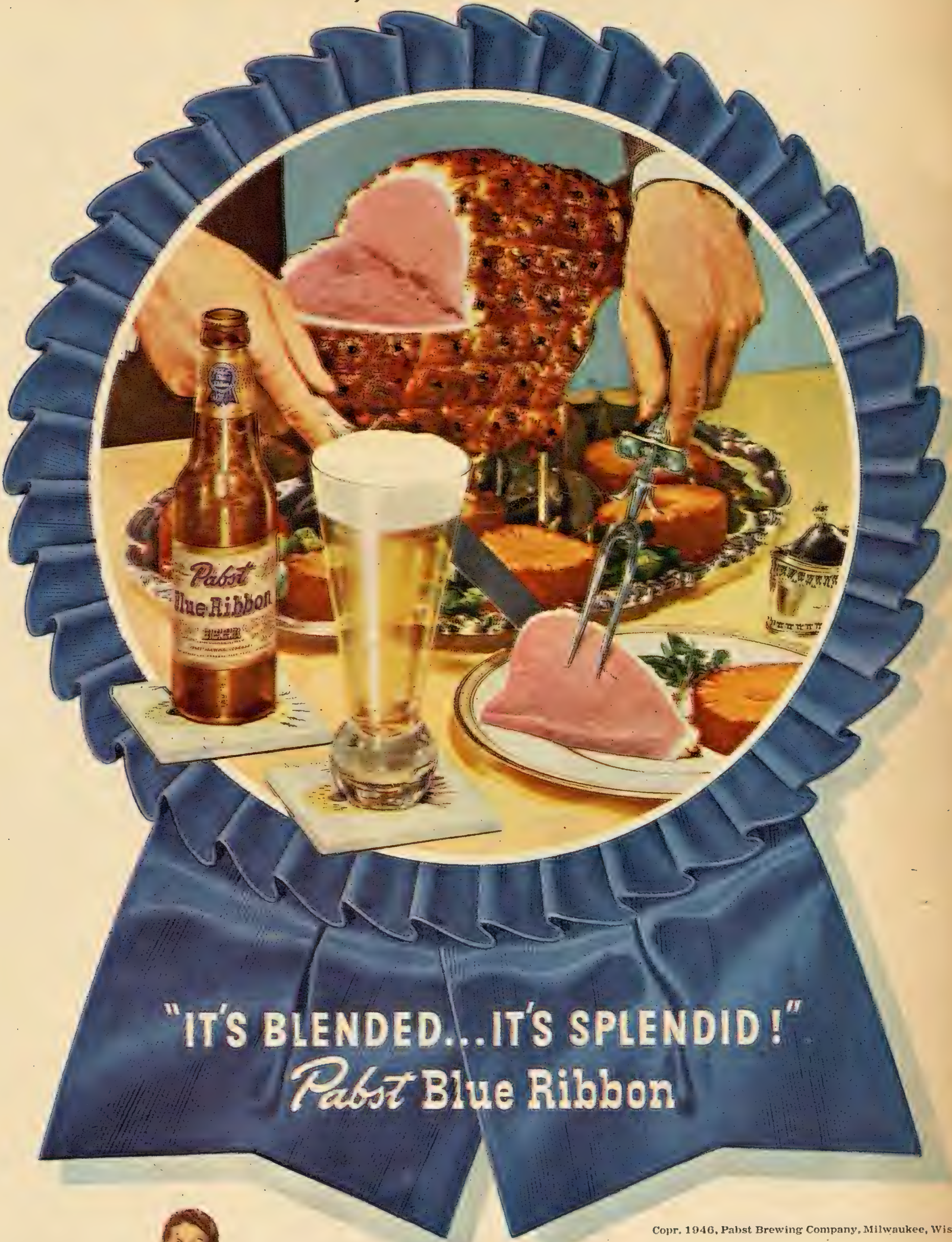
"Do you mean to say," Mr. Longmire asked in some bewilderment, "that I can't get my mind off my toe because Uncle Egbert spanked me for telling a lie?"

"Exactly. You see, when you injured your toe in Mr. Nicoletti's restaurant, your subconscious's sense of right and wrong demanded that he be punished. Resentment formed against him, but, unable to find an outlet, this resentment turned inward and centered with reverse logic on your injured toe. That is

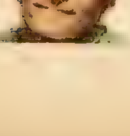
(*Continued on page 58*)

33 FINE BREWS BLENDED INTO ONE GREAT BEER

Order it with Confidence ... Serve it with Pride


Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer
"IT'S BLENDED...IT'S SPLENDID!"
Pabst Blue Ribbon

Copr. 1946, Pabst Brewing Company, Milwaukee, Wisc.



TUNE IN THE DANNY KAYE SHOW EVERY FRIDAY, 10:00 P. M., EST, CBS, COAST TO COAST

(*Continued from page 56*)

why you tried to eat the toe. Is that clear?"

Mr. Longmire blinked and said not very. "Why did I immediately feel better when Nick said that he would pay the bill?" he asked.

"Because," Dr. McBridsky answered, "your hidden conscience accepted that payment as adequate punishment for Mr. Nicoletti."

"Well, tell me this: Why did my neurosis come back right after I refused to sign the insurance company's release?"

"Ah, *that* is the key to the whole thing! You see, your mind did not consider the possibility of permanent incapacitation until the lawyer brought up the subject. That new thought entirely changed the aspect of the matter. The fact that you became angry and threatened to sue shows that your conscience wanted just compensation for your injury."

"Then you think I should sue?"

"That is not for me to say. However, if you do sue, make sure you get only what is coming to you. Obtaining more than your due would upset you just as badly as getting too little. Now if you will excuse me, I have another patient waiting."

Mr. Longmire said good-by, and walked thoughtfully out of the office.

HE pondered the psychiatrist's advice for several days. Meantime, Dr. McBridsky's final bill arrived, which Mr. Longmire promptly paid by check, noting as he did so that he had visited the doctor's office some one hundred and twenty-four times during the past six months at the total cost of twelve hundred and forty dollars.

He was still undecided what to do when, one night, he had a nightmare that made all the others pale in comparison. The toe detached itself from his body, but instead of pursuing its painful path alone, it turned on him and, armed with an inexhaustible supply of hand grenades which it threw at regular intervals, vengefully chased him up and down interminable flights of stairs. He lay trembling until daylight came. Then he got up grimly and went out to look for a lawyer.

The attorney was a keen-eyed young man by the name of Arthur A. Arnold who, Mr. Longmire learned from reliable sources, had had a good deal of success in cases such as this one. Mr. Arnold readily agreed to take the case.

"I suggest," he said brusquely, "that we sue for twenty thousand, with a compromise at ten in mind."

"Oh, no!" Mr. Longmire exclaimed. "That's far too much. I only want what I'm entitled to."

Mr. Arnold frowned. "The toe," he asked, "is one hundred per cent incapacitated, I presume?"

"Well, not exactly. It only bothers me when I do certain things."

"What things, for instance?"

Mr. Longmire had been so engrossed with the psychological aspects of the injured toe that he had paid scant attention to its actual physical limitations. He promised the lawyer he would check up and let him know.

"Excellent," Mr. Arnold said. "Meantime, I shall notify the liability company that we are starting suit." He cleared his throat. "You are—er—prepared to pay a modest retainer, of course?"

"How much?"

"Five hundred dollars is customary."

Mr. Longmire wrote out a check.

DURING the next few days he made a systematic inventory of the things he could and could not do with the toe. Pain and swelling had long since departed, so he could not list these as grounds for damages. The toe did not bother him when walking. He found that he could stand on tiptoe just as well as ever.

After a good deal of careful research, he discovered only one activity in which the toe handicapped him. This, oddly enough, he stumbled upon while taking a bath one evening, and it was such a trivial thing that he hesitated to list it at all. While he was still trying to reach a decision, Mr. Arnold phoned.

"I just talked to Short," the lawyer said cheerily. "We've got him worried. He wants to settle out of court."

"Good!" Mr. Longmire exclaimed fervently.

"He admits that his company is liable. The only question now is how much the settlement should be. Would you be willing to meet him tomorrow morning in my office and talk it over?"

"Certainly."

"See you at ten, then. Oh, by the way, you said you'd check up on the extent of your toe injury. Better give me the dope on it now, so I'll be ready for Short."

Mr. Longmire stared uncomfortably at the floor for a time, then mumbled into the mouthpiece, "I—I did find one thing. Only it's so trivial I hate to mention it."

"Good Lord, don't hold anything back on me! We've got to have something to sue on. What is it?"

Mr. Longmire took a deep breath and timidly told his lawyer the one thing he could no longer do with his right big toe.

There was a startled silence at the other end of the wire, then Mr. Arnold said, obviously pumping enthusiasm into his voice, "Well, at least that's better than nothing. I'll see you in the morning."

Mr. Longmire spent an uneasy, sleepless night. The next morning he felt like a condemned man keeping an appointment with the executioner. His sensitive nature shrank in every fiber from the invasion of his privacy which the next few minutes would bring.

The secretary in Mr. Arnold's outer office announced him, and in a moment the lawyer came hurrying out to greet him. He whispered jubilantly, "We've got Short scared to death. He's already offering to settle for a thousand cash."

"Did you—did you tell him about"—Mr. Longmire gulped—"about what I couldn't do with my toe?"

Mr. Arnold shook his head. "Not yet."

With all his soul, Mr. Longmire longed to order his lawyer to take the thousand and call the whole thing quits, but just in time he recalled the warning Dr. McBridsky had given him. "If you sue, get only your just due. Receiving more than you have coming would upset you just as badly as not receiving enough."

Mr. Longmire strongly suspected that one thousand dollars was more than the specific physical capability he had lost was worth.

"I want only what's coming to me," he said firmly. "No more, no less."

"All right. But I think you're altogether crazy not to take the thousand."

Together, they entered the inner office, where Mr. Short, an attractive blonde stenographer, and a gaunt scholarly-looking man were awaiting them. Mr. Longmire shook hands stiffly with Mr. Short, who then introduced him to the thin-faced man.

"This, Mr. Longmire, is Mr. Poulter, an expert on matters of compensation. He has kindly agreed to act as an arbitrator if we wish."

Mr. Short looked at Mr. Arnold and snapped, "Well, did you tell your client that we were ready to make a settlement?"

"Yes," the attorney said, "but he says that he cannot accept it."

"One thousand dollars is as high as we will go. Surely he can't be so unreasonable—"

MR. LONGMIRE interrupted, "I'm not being unreasonable. I want only what's coming to me."

"And what do you think *is* coming to you?" Short demanded.

"I—I'm not sure."

"You have lost your use of the toe?"

"Uh, partially."

"But you refuse to state what per cent, just as I expected. Well, I came prepared for that. Suppose we lay all the facts of the case before Mr. Poulter and let him decide just what per cent of your injury you're entitled to collect on?"

Reluctantly Mr. Longmire gave his assent. Mr. Poulter opened his briefcase and took out a sheaf of papers, reference books, and printed tables. "I take it," Mr. Poulter said with a kindly smile, "that you gentlemen are ready for me to proceed?"

All the gentlemen said that they were.

"Excellent! Now, it is always my policy to proceed from the general to the specific. The question at hand is exactly what per cent of Mr.

Longmire's physical faculties have been impaired. Correct?"

Everyone nodded.

"If," Mr. Poulter continued, "Mr. Longmire had suffered a fatal injury in his fall, his heirs would be entitled to collect ten thousand dollars."

"Then, dividing the body into four parts," Mr. Poulter went on, "we come to the conclusion that if Mr. Longmire had lost the use of, say, a leg, he would be entitled to twenty-five hundred. Do you follow me, gentlemen?"

The gentlemen all nodded.

"The leg from the knee down, then," the expert continued, "would be worth twelve hundred and fifty dollars. The foot, it logically follows, would be valued at six hundred and twenty-five. There being five toes, it would seem, then, that each would be worth one hundred and twenty-five. Am I going too fast for you?"

"Oh, no!" came a chorus of polite voices, Mr. Longmire's being the loudest among them.

"However," Mr. Poulter said with a scholarly frown, "we cannot honestly assume that one toe is worth exactly the same as another. Therefore I have worked out a weighted index of relative values, which I will take the liberty of reading to you now."

MR. LONGMIRE leaned forward and listened intently as the expert read the following table:

Big toe.....	35 per cent, or	$218.75
Second toe..	27 per cent, or	168.75
Third toe...	18 per cent, or	112.50
Fourth toe..	13 per cent, or	81.25
Fifth toe....	7 per cent, or	43.75
Totals	100 per cent	$625.00

Mr. Arnold broke in, "I take it, then, that my client is entitled to $218.75?"

"He would be," Mr. Poulter agreed, "if he lost the entire use of the toe."

"But he hasn't!" Mr. Short exclaimed. "He admits that it's only partially damaged."

Mr. Poulter raised his eyebrows and looked at Mr. Longmire. "Is this true?"

"Well, yes," Mr. Longmire said weakly.

Mr. Poulter thumbed through the papers on the desk before him, finally selecting a set of closely printed tables. "Then," he said firmly, "the thing to do is to determine the number of activities in which your injury handicaps you. Comparing them with this table of things toes are used for, we can reach a logical conclusion as to the per cent of your handicap. You will please enumerate, Mr. Longmire, the activities in which your toe can no longer engage."

The moment which Mr. Longmire dreaded was at hand. He whispered, "Do I *have* to tell?"

"You're stalling!" Mr. Short exclaimed. "It's just as I've thought all along, there's absolutely nothing wrong with his toe."

"But there is!" Mr. Longmire said.

"Then state exactly what it is," Mr. Short demanded, leering at him.

Mr. Longmire took a deep breath, then said in a low voice, "I can't turn off the cold-water faucet with my toes any more."

Complete silence lay over the room. Then Mr. Short exploded, "You can't *what?*"

"When I take a bath," Mr. Longmire blurted miserably, "I always get in the tub and turn off the faucets with my toes—the hot water with my left foot and the cold water with my right foot." He concluded lamely, "Only I can't turn off the cold-water faucet with my right foot any more."

"Good Lord!" Mr. Short exclaimed.

"Extraordinary!" Mr. Poulter gasped.

The blonde stenographer giggled. Mr. Longmire stared at the floor, his face the color of a beet.

Mr. Arnold tactfully came to his rescue. "I must admit," the lawyer said, "that my client's handicap is unusual. But he does have a valid claim, and it is up to you, Mr. Poulter, to settle it."

Mr. Poulter nodded. "One moment, please. I'll have to do a bit of figuring."

The compensation expert took pencil and paper and worked for several minutes before he looked up with a triumphant expression. "My conclusion," he announced, "is that the per cent of permanent injury to Mr. Longmire's toe is two and fifty-seven one hundredths."

Unable to control himself any longer, Mr. Longmire half rose from his chair and blurted, "How much does that figure in cash?"

"Five dollars and sixty-three cents."

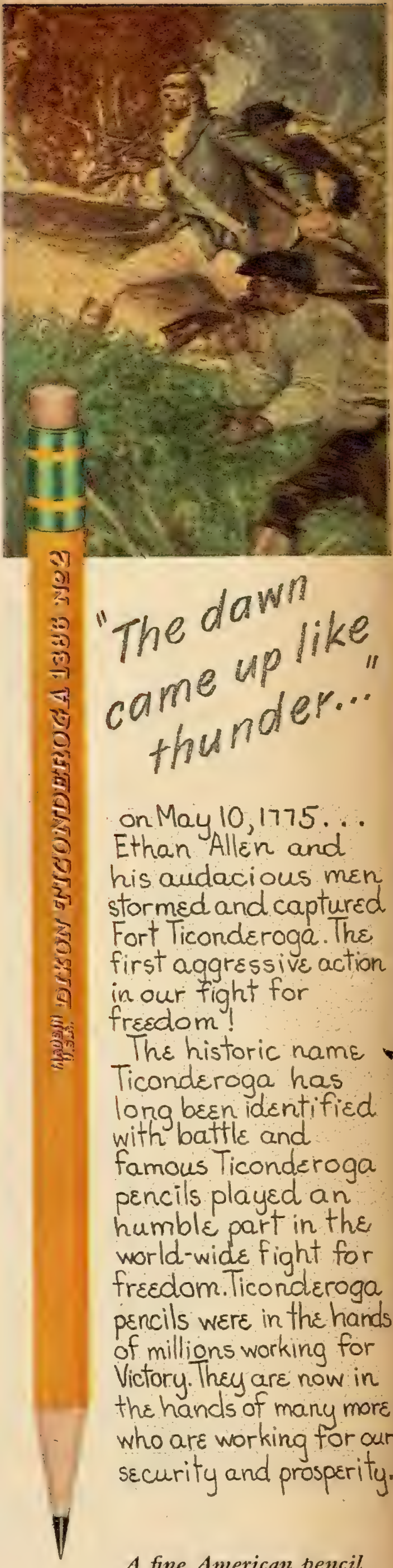
With a relieved sigh, Mr. Longmire sat down and muttered, "Thank the Lord that's over!"

MR. LONGMIRE was the happiest, most carefree man in all Manhattan as he hurried across Washington Square. The five-sixty-three check in his pocket soothed his conscience. No longer would the nightmares haunt him. He had received his just dues. He had found peace.

He was whistling as he entered his apartment. But as he undressed and went into the bathroom to remove the day's accumulation of dust and perspiration from his body, he stopped whistling. Moodily he stared at the bathtub. For the first time he admitted to himself that the loss of his faucet-twisting ability was not as serious a thing as he had first believed. He seldom took tub baths.

Mr. Longmire's forehead wrinkled in a worried frown as he pulled the shower curtain and turned on the spray. Was the five dollars and sixty-three cents more than his just due?

THE END



"The dawn came up like thunder..."

on May 10, 1775... Ethan Allen and his audacious men stormed and captured Fort Ticonderoga. The first aggressive action in our fight for freedom!

The historic name Ticonderoga has long been identified with battle and famous Ticonderoga pencils played an humble part in the world-wide fight for freedom. Ticonderoga pencils were in the hands of millions working for Victory. They are now in the hands of many more who are working for our security and prosperity.

A fine American pencil with a fine American name

TICONDEROGA

Joseph Dixon Crucible Co., Dept. 10-J5, Jersey City 3, N. J.

MacARTHUR FREES MRS. MOTO

Continued from Page 19

back. If the husband died, as often happened in the war years, she was not allowed to sell the house or any other property without the permission of the late husband's male relatives. The eldest of the bunch told the rest what the decision would be; it was usually no.

These and the many other things had reduced Japanese woman to a point below indifference. To overcome this mental inertia which is rooted in centuries of habit, and rouse the woman to action on her own behalf through the ballot, will not be easy. Militating against it in these straitened times is her extreme preoccupation with the housing shortage, living costs, and getting food for the family.

But, bemused as the woman is by these problems, they may help to awaken her. Some prior groundwork to that end was unwittingly laid by the men while the war was on. In drafting women for work, they gave them a taste of economic self-reliance. The meaning of domestic drudge began to register with them after that, and the old preachments about the virtue of blind obedience took on a corny quality.

When the Americans came, the woman couldn't help but make a few critical comparisons between them and the native specimen—which is not to imply that the Americans' behavior is universally above reproach. She liked the utter novelty of being surrendered a seat in the public conveyances, escorted across the street, allowed to go first through doorways, to express a thought now and then. The Western amenities appealed to her.

The women leaders, armed with the word of enfranchisement, still not known or understood by most, are seeking to bring the pot to a boil, through the radio, the press, stage, schools, lecture platform, and by organization. The woman who wrote her paper advocating removal of the emperor was a straw in the wind of what is beginning to result.

CHIEF engineer of the women leaders' efforts is a red-headed American WAC, Lieutenant Ethel B. Weed of Cleveland, who heads the Women's Section of the Planning and Operations Division of Civil Information and Education under SCAP. The women come to her office at Radio Tokyo. They are starved for information about the world beyond Japan and what other women are doing.

Lieutenant Weed instills initiative in them by putting them on their own. She teaches them not to take no for a final answer—to go ahead and, if they are stopped, change the things that stop them.

One of the leaders who call on her is Mrs. Kanju Kato. The former Baroness Shidsue Ishimoto, Mrs. Kato is one of the most erudite and free-spirited women in Japan. When Home Minister Zenjiro Horikiri made some rash statements at the opening of the last Diet session, setting off a tremor of protests from women, she jumped at Lieutenant Weed's suggestion to answer him. The Home Minister had declaimed that only half of the women eligible to vote would turn out in the coming election, and 90 per cent of these would vote as their male superiors dictated; that the vote of the remaining 10 per cent meant nothing so long as the restrictive laws against women stayed on the books, and that he had no intention of changing those laws, either civil or criminal.

Lieutenant Weed arranged a radio program and Mrs. Kato faced the Minister at the microphone. Although the moderator adroitly turned the discussion to birth control as she challenged him, blocking an answer, the incident was significant in having occurred at all. It was the first time in Japan's history that the government had been drawn before the gunsights of a woman. Now, at Lieutenant Weed's instigation, all issues of the day are discussed at the microphone.

MRS. KATO, a slender woman of forty-nine, is author of the onetime best-selling Facing Two Ways, published in America. She wrote the book first in Japanese, then converted it into English herself, with the help of her friend Mary Beard, of the historian team of Charles and Mary Beard, who combed out the grammar. The book is the story of her life.

Mrs. Kato is one of an estimated twenty women who plan to run for election to the new Diet. With her husband, a candidate from another prefecture, she has chosen the Social Democratic ticket. She has no illusion that many of women's problems will be solved in their first time at bat. They are too far down in mental and spiritual hibernation.

Mrs. Yoko Matsuoka, Swarthmore, class of 1939, is another frequent caller on Lieutenant Weed. She is a member of the women's branch of the Society of Foreign Relations, whose function is to spread knowledge of world affairs. Mrs. Matsuoka is also a member of the Women's Democratic Club, started since the war ended and probably the most progressive of the many women's organizations cropping up. Anyone interested in democratic thought is invited to join. Having lived in America, she is in demand as a lecturer, which is the form of her contribution to the work of arousing the Japanese woman to the facts of her emancipation.

Two of many women who are using the pen in the new women's cause, as they have used it in the past, with more or less grief to themselves, are Miss Ineko Sata and Mrs. Yuriko Miyamoto.

Miss Sata, whose independent spirit, like Mrs. Kato's, is reflected by a divorce and a few brushes with the police, was a proletarian novelist and playwright who turned war correspondent during the hostilities. An attractive woman of about thirty-five, she once wrote a few cautious criticisms of woman's lack of property rights. She was set upon by the notorious Ken-Pei-tai and Tokko, secret military and "thought" police respectively, who let her know that such writing was "demoralizing."

She is a leading member of the Shin Nippon Bungaku-kai, or New Japan Literary Society, now fast expanding under the new opportunity to speak out.

Mrs. Miyamoto, a matrônly woman with Western mannerisms, is probably Japan's best-known woman writer. She produced her first book at eighteen, Crowd of the Poor, which was reprinted in a liberal magazine. She, too, has a jail record to her credit, and her husband, a Communist literary critic, was jailed in 1933, one month after their marriage, and kept until last October.

She was locked up ten years ago for her work in the radical literary movement, serving one year of a three-year sentence; and was jailed again the day after Pearl Harbor because her writings were antiwar, anti-imperialism, and pro-Communism. She was held until July, 1942, without trial; then, nearly dead from illness induced by the historic heat of that summer, released under a law against letting people die in jail.

With liberal interpolations in Japanese, Mrs. Miyamoto, who visited America as a girl of twenty, beamed on the future. "Now is a very interesting time come; we can work so fully; I can write a very interesting novel." That is the medium through which she will promote democracy.

A LEADING educator working for the woman's future is Mrs. Setsuko Hani. Her mother, now eighty-three and a famous iconoclast, was Japan's first woman journalist, founding the first woman's magazine, Fujin Notomo or Woman's Friend. The magazine drew so much response that the mother established subscription clubs throughout the country, using them as a medium for the spread of liberalism.

With these under way, the mother set up what is today Nippon's only coeducational school: Jiyu Gakuen, which means Freedom School. Its 600 boys and girls are mostly from homes subscribing to her magazine. Also, it is the only school not directly under the Ministry of Education. One school of the same type and not under that Ministry, was too weak to survive wartime criticism of coeducation as an enemy thing.

Mrs. Hani's position as adviser to the Minister of Education is largely a sinecure, for he is not prone to

(*Continued on page 62*)

A Favorite in Flowers

THE PURPLE LILAC—State Flower of New Hampshi

DIXIE
BELLE

DIXIE
BELLE
London Dry
DIXIE
BELLE
DISTILLED
London Dry
GIN

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90 Proof • Distilled from 100% Grain Neutral Spirits
CONTINENTAL DISTILLING CORPORATION, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

(*Continued from page 60*)

take advice. He still insists that her boys and girls be separated from the age of thirteen onward.

"This practice is a survival of feudalism," she said. "It must be abolished if woman is to function as the equal of man. It is plain stubbornness on the part of the Minister of Education that it continues."

In the field of labor, Miss Tsuneko Akamatsu, Japan's foremost woman labor leader, has ambitious plans. She heads the Women's Section of 50,000 members in the Federation of Labor Unions, disbanded during the war, and is vice-president of the women's branch of the Socialist Party. A college graduate and a veteran warrior of twenty years in the field, her peasant hands and weathered face reflect the wear of factory work and of many campaigns. She has been jailed more times than she remembers, but she usually gained at least some ground.

She broke the system under which girls were pawned to the silk mills by their parents. She also forced an end to the prison-like conditions in the dormitories where the girls lived at the factories.

In Okaya, famous silk town on Honshu, where 50,000 girls manned the numerous small mills, discontent ran so high among them years ago that the owners imported handsome boys and encouraged immorality to help counter it. This gave rise to a rumor that the smoke from the factory stacks had the odor of human flesh, the implication being that this was the fate of love's by-blows.

When Akamatsu distributed handbills calling for a union at the largest mill, employing 1,000, the girls helping her were fired. Urged by her, all the girls walked out on strike. The strike failed, but five years later, trying again, Akamatsu succeeded. She is currently working to unionize all silk plants in Okaya. She is retarded by the ignorance of the workers, 80 per cent of whom are women, and who have been too long in ignorance and fear to speak or act. The factories still oppose her, using as an excuse to keep her out that they are organizing their own unions. These, incidentally, are not recognized as labor unions by GHQ.

For her part, Akamatsu plans to found a women's labor school, to teach women what they can do and must do now to help shape their future.

BUT what about the woman in the street? What are her thoughts and plans?

Miss Teruko Ajima, a pretty high-school graduate of twenty-four, worked in a news agency during the war. She would rather not work again. She had no interest in the election.

Clerking in the fine-arts section of the Shirokiya department store, on the Ginza, was Mrs. Ine Asai, thirty-two, a widow. She believed the women's vote could be made to count for good, and wanted young women in office rather than the old. She certainly planned to vote—the Social Democratic ticket.

Mrs. Fujiko Kumagai, forty-six, wife of an American newspaperman, said she might vote for a man but certainly not for any woman. Women of the kind standing for office couldn't know much about the problems of the common housewife, so there was no use voting for them.

A girl suburban-train conductor, Miss Yoshiko Nishida, twenty-two, said, "I haven't quite made up my mind yet. From my limited education I don't even know what democracy is or what a democratic nation is. I understand that Japan is going to be a democratic country, but I don't know what she would be like."

Down in black-market row, near the Shimbashi station, an old woman selling dark hunks of stuff that passed for candy said she thought she would vote, but she didn't know why. "I'm too old to think much about such things," she said.

A woman hawking fish halted her spiel long enough to answer, "Hang the vote! All I'm interested in is somebody to buy my fish." She turned back to her work. "Fresh raw saba—very cheap, only thirteen yen; others are asking seventeen."

THE END

BORDER BULLFIGHT

Continued from Page 15

derillas. He doesn't quite know how it happens—and neither do you—but suddenly that man leaps high into the air, in over the plunging horns, and the two turpentined barbs go into the bull's shoulders. They cause him to swing his head back to get at them, leaving the devilish figure who had put them there to land safely where but a moment before the needle-like horns had been.

Occasionally, of course, the *banderillas* do miss. Sometimes a bull, in his calf fighting days, has injured a horn that is tender, and this may cause him to hook only to one side. And when this happens the *doctor de la plaza* does what little he can to stop the flow of blood spurting from the man's femoral artery while a robed priest stands by and the crowds in the arena yell as another bull is brought in.

But the young matador with the brown peon face doesn't miss. He doesn't miss a second time with two more beribboned *banderillas*. The man who has been working the bull with the cape comes out with a long bright sword concealed in the dangling expanse of a red cloth called a *muleta*.

For three or four minutes he plays the bull with the red cloth, pirouetting with each lunge, snapping it in front of the bull's slobbering nose. Then somebody in the crowd begins to yell, *"Muerte! Muerte!"* In English, *muerte* means death. They are calling for the kill.

The young matador with the blank face kills the bull. In split seconds. You catch a flash of his lean body, poised like a ballet dancer, leaning slightly forward at a falling slant, right elbow high in the air, forearm in line with the shiny blade pointing down at a spot between the bull's shoulder blades. He seems to fall forward on top of the bull. The sword goes deep, and as the matador leaps clear of the falling bull you suddenly realize that he has driven the weapon entirely through the animal's body.

It is a clean kill.

UP until now the star performer, Potbelly in the white sombrero, has been pretty disdainful of the whole affair, standing clear and letting the small fry fight the small fry. A couple of times, however, he has stepped out and let fly with his cape, just to let the feminine members among the spectators know he is still around. But it's his turn now. With four bulls on the afternoon card, he is to kill the second and fourth. They bring in number two and the young matadors serving as cape men work it toward him and give him a chance to study its ways.

Presently, after all rituals of picador and placing of *banderillas* and so on are done, he gets ready for the kill. But Potbelly bungles his first thrust. He seems to have caught the bull with its front feet spread far apart, which places the shoulder blades close together. The sword sinks in about twelve inches and stops. So it is up to the other matadors to get the bull to whirling with their capes in order to get the sword slung out. Finally it flies free. One of the cape men picks it up and wipes it off. Custom says that it is beneath Potbelly's dignity to pick up the sword himself. He tries again.

This time the sword blade goes in all of two feet and has to be slung out again. But on the third try Potbelly kills the bull with a sharp thrust of his brawny arm.

They bring in the third bull. This is strictly a slapstick performance. First of all, the matador is the little short fellow who's been strutting about. Secondly, the bull is a fierce four-year-old and much larger than most Spanish fighting bulls. It completely dwarfs its tormentor. Thirdly, when the picadors ride in to prod the bull into fresh anger, one of the horses loses its mattress. It catches a hind foot in the ropes, sits down on its haunches. After that things happen fast.

The horse refuses to get off its haunches. The bull chases the matadors and the rump thumpers over the fence. The little show-off of a matador glares angrily at the haw-hawing spectators and goes stomping back into the ring again. He is very upset and scowling angrily at the spectators, the bull, and the disgusted horse. He works the bull over across the ring until the horse is heaved up by the tail and led out. He's more angry at the horse and spectators than at the bull.

He keeps shooting staccato Spanish at the other cape men to get the bull into just the right position when it comes time for the kill. He's afraid and you can see it. So can the jeering *aficionados.* He shoots out more staccato Spanish and one of the young peons snaps something back, slams his cape on the fence, and stalks out of the ring. This goads Shorty into trying for the kill. He lunges with the sword, high up on his toes to get in above the big bull's black shoulders.

He might as well have tried to pierce a rubber wall, the way the sword bounces off the bone in the animal's shoulders. It sails away—and so does the matador, who turns out to be surprisingly fleet of foot. The bull chases him over the wall and out of sight behind its protecting barricade, then follows him over in a freak lunge. Shorty legs it down the circular corridor with the bull in pursuit and then slides through a conveniently placed opening into the ring again. The others open a gate and get the bull back into the arena.

While they're keeping the animal occupied, Shorty picks up the sword and holds it up to show the critical fans that the end was blunted. It's not his fault at all. He heads for another sticker, and after a few more tries finally gets his bull with a fairly good stroke.

It takes about five minutes for the two *vaqueros* on young strong horses to dash in, loop ropes around the dead bull's hind feet, and spur out again while fresh sand is sprinkled over the blood. Shorty spends most of this five minutes alternately bowing and snarling at the spectators while making a triumphant strut all the way around the arena.

THEY bring out the fourth and final bull for Potbelly to kill. This bull is smaller than the third but the meanest of them all. He sets out to clear the ring and does it, even Potbelly ducking back of the barricade.

For several minutes the bull battles it out with the taunting capes until he finally has to slow up, flanks heaving and his tongue beginning to show. But he's still on the rampage, and the two *banderillas* sunk deep in his back, after four tries by a nimble-footed cape man, don't improve things any. He cuts loose once more and Potbelly takes over.

By now you're pretty disgusted with the star performer, realizing that he's a third-rate hasbeen heavyweight making a circuit of the third-rate clubs and fighting for peanuts. He's been completely outshone by the wiry youngsters half his age, on their way up and dreaming of the day the call will come from promoters at Mexico City. Potbelly has been there—and back.

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But he does one thing that makes you forget he's a ham-and-egg hasbeen. When the bull makes a direct lunge at him, he drops on his knees in its path. He stays there on his knees until the enraged beast is only five feet away, and still he doesn't move. But his cape flicks out in a whirling motion to one side and the bull swerves, goring at the cape and missing him by so close a margin it rips the right sleeve of his white silk shirt.

And when, a couple of minutes later, one of the younger men slips and goes down, crabbed up, beneath those murderous horns, it's old Potbelly who's on the bull in a flash, his yellow cape working beautifully under its nose, distracting its attention until the downed matador can roll clear. Yes, he's a hasbeen, but you've got to admire him, for he must use cunning and experience to make up for legs and body slowing up and packing too much fat, but *he knows his bullfighting!*

THE fight has started at 4 P.M. Mexico time, which is five across the border, a mile north. The sun has swung far over into the west, and the gentle breeze that was cool in the afternoon now runs sharp teeth into your body. Around you the *aficionados* snuggle up closer and hug their bodies for warmth, while on top of the wall the impassive soldiers still sit like brown statues, silent, unmoving, Mausers upright between their knees.

Then the big matador in the bell-bottom pantaloons with lace down the legs goes out to make the final kill of the evening. He speaks sharply to his cape men and they begin working the bull into position. Four bright-colored *banderillas* dangle at odd angles from its shoulders and there is a large red splotch at their closely spaced base. The bull has its head half lowered, its eyes fixed on the square expanse of the red *muleta* moving toward it, long sword concealed.

Potbelly speaks sharply in Spanish. One of the cape men moves in closer with his cape. He holds it up toward the bull and then dangles it tantalizingly. But the bull is tired and refuses to take the bait. The cape man moves closer, stomps his foot a couple of times and a *chook-chook-chook* sound comes from his throat. The bull lunges twice in quick succession, whirls, and is almost on top of Potbelly, which was what he wanted. It goes for him, wild-eyed and snorting, and for the twentieth time its horns swish through space and find no red cloth.

Potbelly is working the bull close now, its horns almost grazing his big hips. The crowd loves that. Time after time he thrills them, once spinning on his heels and walking away, turning his back squarely on those murderous horns five feet distant. The sun drops lower and pretty soon the cry, *"Muerte, muerte!"* goes up from the crowd.

"I think you'd better play for his midsection."

LIBERTY

You see the red cloth change over to the big Mexican's left hand, his right holding the sword. You catch the stiffening of his body, the half-fall forward, body rigid, elbow held high, eye sighting along the blade lined down at the soft spot between the bull's spread shoulder blades. The sword goes deep, its bright length disappearing, point piercing the lungs.

You half rise from your seat to go, but the bull doesn't fall. It backs away, the handle of the sword high above its spine. Its hind legs shake and red begins to run from its nose. It continues to back away, trying desperately to hold up hips that suddenly have grown very heavy. The matadors close in, calm and relaxed; waiting. They follow the bull as it backs almost across the ring before the hips give away. Then it goes down almost against the wall of the ring. It doesn't fall over and stretch out, as have the others. It lies down heavily and, except for the sword handle high in its back, and the red running from its nose, might have been dozing and chewing a cud.

Gone now is the rage from its eyes. It shows no interest in the matadors, one of whom carries a short-bladed knife. It pays no attention when a matador pulls the red sword from its back. It just wants to die in peace. The matador with the knife administers the *coup de grâce* by sinking the short needle-pointed blade into the spinal cord back of its ears.

The bull feels nothing, hears nothing, nor does it see Potbelly taking his bows from the hand-clapping crowd, bloody sword held high in triumph. The red from its nose leaves a thin crimson trail in the sand as the two horses drag it out of the arena.

THE END

THE LION AND THE BEAR

Continued from Page 13

life line is in Britain's. And the only direction in which Russia can turn to secure year-round access to the high seas through such ports is toward the Near and Middle East.

The shortest and easiest way for Russia is to push south to the Persian Gulf—which means controlling Iran. In other words, Russia's interest in Iran is not restricted to the north and is not confined to oil. She is interested in all of Iran and her motive is to secure an outlet to the ocean.

The second possibility for Russia is to push out of the landlocked Black Sea and establish communications between her southern ports and the rest of the world through the Red Sea or the Mediterranean. To protect such a line, she needs positions at exactly the same points where Britain holds them now—and, in addition, at one other, the Dardanelles, controlling the passage from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

THE various claims which Russia has made and is making to ex-enemy and other territories along this route become immediately clear in the light of Russia's preoccupation with the establishment of a self-guaranteed line of communications to the high seas. She wants to participate in the international control of Tangier for the same reason that Britain holds Gibraltar on the opposite side of the strait. She wants trusteeship over Italy's Tripoli, to watch the narrows of the Mediterranean, which England guards from Malta. She wants facilities in the Dodecanese Islands, near Britain's Cyprus. She wants to move into Italy's Eritrea across the strait of Bab el Mandeb from Aden.

And, of course, the Russia of the Soviets, like the Russia of the Czars, wants to control the strait of the Dardanelles, for none of these other points would be of any use to her if Turkey could shut Russian shipping up in the Black Sea.

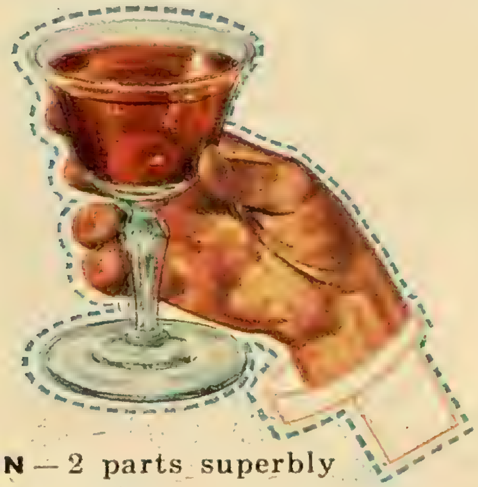
To rivalry for control of communications in this area is added rivalry for its oil, and the Near and Middle East, particularly Iran, is rich in the precious fuel.

Russian policy on the oil of Iran, like Russian policy on the Dardanelles, is older than the Soviet regime itself. Today, in fact, the Russia of Stalin has resumed a policy which the Russia of the Czars crystallized in 1907, when an agreement was made with England which divided Persia (Iran) into two spheres of influence, giving Russia a free hand in the north and Britain in the south.

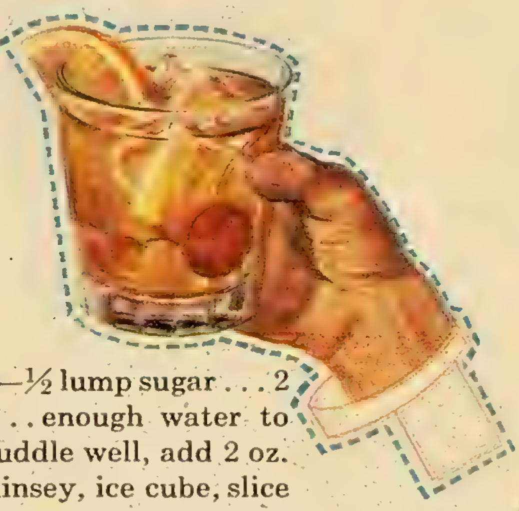
From the Teheran Conference emerged a declaration described as a

(*Continued on page 66*)

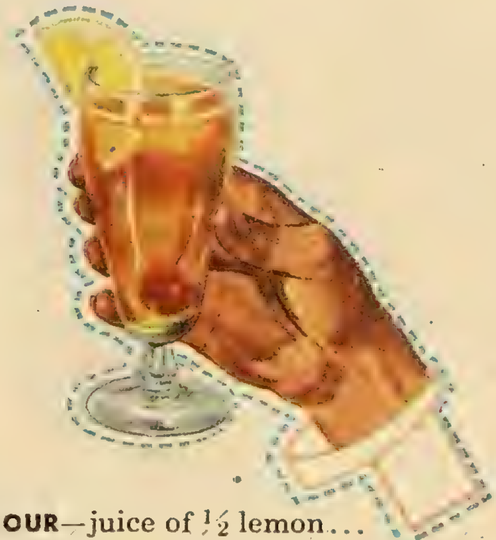
COCKTAIL CUT-OUTS
in the best of taste
(WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE?)



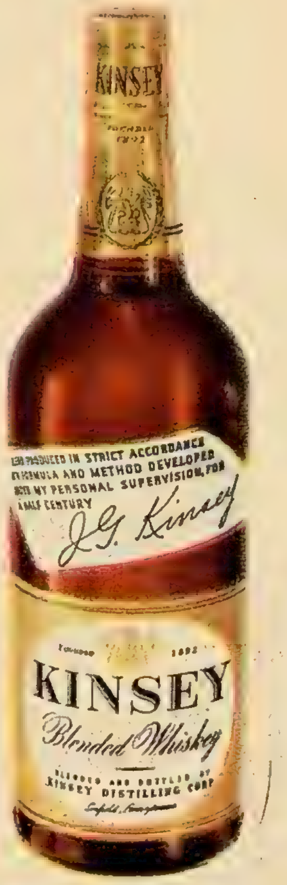
MANHATTAN—2 parts superbly smooth Kinsey Whiskey . . . 1 part sweet Vermouth . . . 1 dash bitters. Add ice, stir (don't shake) . . . strain into glass . . . add cherry . . . and settle back for one of the finest Manhattans you ever tasted. (*Write us if we're wrong!*)



OLD-FASHIONED—½ lump sugar . . . 2 dashes bitters . . . enough water to cover sugar. Muddle well, add 2 oz. light, mellow Kinsey, ice cube, slice of orange, lemon and a cherry. *And no fair sneaking an extra drink before you serve your guests!*



WHISKEY SOUR—juice of ½ lemon . . . ½ teaspoon powdered sugar or honey . . . 2 oz. grand-tasting Kinsey. Add ice and shake, strain into glass. Add soda, decorate with half slice of lemon and a cherry. *How can you wait?*



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(*Continued from page 64*)

guaranty of the independence of Iran. Obviously it was nothing of the sort. A nation whose independence has to be guaranteed to her by other nations is clearly not independent at all. The real meaning of the Teheran declaration was quite different. It was a truce in the rivalry for Iranian oil, dictated by the necessity of concentrating on more momentous matters.

For the struggle for oil had begun again in Iran even during the war. Standard Oil of New Jersey and Sinclair Oil were interesting themselves in concessions in southeastern Iran. The Russians were asking for similar privileges in the north. Thus, though no written document existed to that effect, as in 1907, the tendency nevertheless was to return to the north-south division of Iran into spheres of influence, so far as oil was concerned at least, which had been agreed upon in that year. The three nations which conferred in Iran deferred the re-establishment of this situation until the end of the war—and by deferring it, in a sense recognized its validity and thereby strengthened it.

Russia's actions in Azerbaijan after the end of the war thus constituted part of her campaign for the oil of northern Persia, resumed at the expiration of the truce of Teheran. Perhaps she would have been content to limit her interest to the north and leave the south to Britain and America if oil alone had been the stake. But there is that other matter of the Gulf ports. Even if there were no oil in southern Persia, that motive would still remain to incite Russian expansion southward through Iran.

IN their efforts to limit that expansion with its threat to deprive Britain of the monopoly position she had acquired momentarily as the only great modern power present in the Near East, the British countered the Russian push by a policy whose first phase consisted of working with the Arabs to keep all other foreign powers out of the vital area. This included the United States, for American companies had acquired extensive oil concessions in Saudi Arabia and wanted to build pipe lines from them to eastern Mediterranean ports across territories controlled directly or indirectly by Britain, a project which was at first unwelcome to the British.

Inspired by British influence, the states of the Near and Middle East established two barriers against Russian expansion. The outer line of defense was the group of nations linked by the Saadabad nonaggression treaty. The inner line of defense was the Arab League.

The Saadabad treaty was clearly directed against Russia, as was apparent from its membership alone. Its signatories were Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan, forming a belt along Russia's southern border. But any hopes the British may have pinned to the Saadabad group must have been dissipated last March. It was then that Russian troop movements in Iran demonstrated Russia's ability (*a*) to occupy Iran totally at will, thus knocking her out of the four-power group; (*b*) by virtue of this same movement, to separate Afghanistan, the easternmost member of the group, from the two westernmost states; and (*c*) by progressing to the point where the Turkish, Iranian, and Iraqian borders meet (within controlling distance of the only railroad from Turkey to Iran, which follows the Turco-Syrian and Turco-Iraqian borders) to split Turkey and Iraq as well. In short, Russia provided an object lesson in the impossibility of any united action by these states against her and in the improbability that any other power could bring military force to bear in this particular part of the world sufficient to keep her from doing what she wants.

After this, it is immaterial whether Russia remains in Iran in force or chooses to withdraw militarily from the territory. Her ability to dominate it has been proved and the government of Teheran in consequence cannot effectively oppose Moscow on any point which the Soviet Union considers it essential to gain.

THE Russian movements in March served also as part of the war of nerves against Turkey, designed to intimidate her into meeting Russia's desires concerning the Dardanelles despite Britain's encouragement to resist them. A much earlier move in this campaign had been the claim of the Armenian Soviet to absorb Turkish Armenia. If this claim had been satisfied, the result would have been to give Russia a comparatively weak frontier at this point, with a finger of the Armenian Soviet poking into Turkey, probably only to be amputated at the first crisis.

To the Armenian claim, therefore, Russia suddenly added a second demand, this time from the Georgian Soviet. This called for a strip of territory along the Black Sea, north of the Armenian claim. The significance of this demand was both defensive and offensive. Defensively, this territory shields Russia's oil port of Baku, otherwise too near the border for comfort. Offensively, it covers the classic invasion route into Turkey, across the Kars Plateau. Turkey becomes helpless the moment any power seizes the Kars Plateau —just as Czechoslovakia became helpless the moment Germany acquired the Sudeten area, containing her fortifications and her industry.

Another threat to Turkey, which was simultaneously a threat also to Iraq and the oil fields of Mosul, developed when the Kurds of Iran, encouraged by Russia, began to show an interest in autonomy. There are about half a million Kurds in Iran, somewhat more than in Iraq, and nearly two million in Turkey. As the land claimed from Turkey by the Georgian Soviet is just north of what the Armenian Soviet wants, so the part of Turkey inhabited by the Kurds is just south of Russia's previous desiderata, the provinces of Kars and Ardahan.

Acquirement of this territory would immensely strengthen Russia's strategic position and complete the process of protecting her from attack via the south. She has not forgotten that during the war France's General Maxime Weygand wanted to lead his Near East army against Russia, then still on apparently friendly terms with Germany, and that he would have had his choice of two routes—one over the Kars Plateau, at precisely the point where Russia demanded Turkish territory, and the other through Iran, which was blocked from the time when Russia established control over Azerbaijan.

THE second line of defense against Russia was the Arab League, initially formed with British approval by Syria, Transjordania, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen. The British theory seemed to be that a united Arab world would tend to keep non-Arab powers out of the Near East, but that Britain, being already present there, and in close relations with at least four of its seven members, could hold her own. Arab nationalism was to be the barrier against Russian nationalism behind which British nationalism would shelter itself. The risk that Arab nationalism would affect British interests was accepted on the theory that in the rivalry between Russia and Britain in the Near East, its intensification would be relatively more favorable to the British side. It was not long before the British were supplied with grave reasons for doubting the accuracy of that theory. They might perhaps have anticipated them.

The Arab states are authoritarian and anti-democratic to the core. And it would seem to be ideologically inconsistent of Britain to encourage such an organization as the Arab League, until the situation is viewed from the standpoint of Russo-British rivalry in the Near East. This has led Britain into some strange actions. In one of these the United States participated (and, oddly enough, Russia consented to it). That was the admission into the United Nations at the last minute of certain Near Eastern states. They were permitted to declare an eleventh-hour war which they never fought in order to secure entry. The object of this maneuver was largely to add what it was hoped would be the anti-Russian votes of the Moslem states to the UNO roster.

Similarly inconsistent was the very mild treatment by the British of some Near Eastern friends of the Axis, notably the Grand Mufti of

Jerusalem, who collaborated with Germany in both World Wars. He was not even listed as a war criminal, though he organized the SS. Moslem Division in World War II. Instead, he was held in "captivity" in a luxurious villa near Paris. And the Grand Mufti's cousin, Jamal el Husseini, interned for his anti-Allied activity, was suddenly permitted to return to Palestine to resume his leadership of the Arabs at a time when the situation in that country was explosive.

In this curiously mild treatment of these two members of the Husseinite family we are faced, perhaps, with an action which was not motivated by the first phase of British policy (the strengthening of Arab unity against Russia), but by the second phase (a reversal of this policy because its dangers proved in practice greater than they had seemed in anticipation).

For the British had been given cause to reconsider the advisability of backing the Arab League. Since it had become active, Britain had been obliged to put down anti-Jewish terrorism by Arab nationalists. Anti-British demonstrations occurred in Egypt, and Moslems took a prominent part in rioting in India.

Did these indications that Arab unity would be dangerous first of all to Great Britain account for England's permission to Jamal el Husseini to return to Palestine? There are other signs that Britain is no longer supporting Arab unity but, instead, has returned to a former policy of backing the Husseinites against other Arab factions.

The Husseinite dynasty extended its power in the Near East after World War I, but Ibn Saud, leading the ascetic Wahabites, who might be described as Arab fundamentalists, initiated holy war against his coreligionaries, whom the Wahabites held to have become soft, degenerate, and worldly. He took the Hedjaz from its king, Hussein ibn Ali, and joined it to his own Saudi Arabia, and later added also Yemen, the sultanate of the Nejd and the principality of Asir. Meanwhile, the French had driven Emir Feisal, third son of Hussein, out of Syria and he had become King of Iraq. The Husseinites were reduced to nominal control of Iraq and Transjordania under the British. With the development of the Arab League, it appeared that they would no longer contest Arab leadership with Ibn Saud.

BUT now the Husseinites are returning to the arena. On the presses as this article is being written is a book attacking Ibn Saud and his followers, the Wahabites.

That book is being published in Palestine, a British mandate where British censorship could, if it wished, prevent the appearance of a work certain to provoke Arab disunity. Its author is Emir Abdullah, the British puppet King of Transjordania, of the Husseinite group to which Jamal el Husseini and the Grand Mufti also belong. At the same time, Britain has agreed to abandon her mandate over Transjordania and give it "independence" as she did for Iraq. With that development may be linked a movement for a union of Iraq with Transjordania—that is, of the two Husseinite states. And does the future hold forth another linkage, of this new twin territory with the proposed "greater Syria"—Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine? The first of these three is former Husseinite territory and might be claimed by them again. The last is closely linked with Transjordania, historically and economically. In short, the possibility exists of the creation of a Husseinite bloc which could only tend to disintegrate the new-found unity of the Arab League.

Accompanying the second phase of British policy toward the Arabs comes also a second phase of policy toward the United States. With the mighty shadow of the Russian bear falling across the Near East, British objections to American presence in the Near East have given way to British co-operation. And it is as a potential ally of Great Britain that the United States has entered into a petroleum agreement with her.

The basic conflict in the Near East is between the old British Empire and the new Russian Empire, but

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Octopus He combs his hair with water. After water dries, his hair sticks out and hangs down like tentacles. Kreml Hair Tonic keeps hair neatly in place from morn 'til night.

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Relieves Itching of Dry Scalp — Removes Dandruff Flakes
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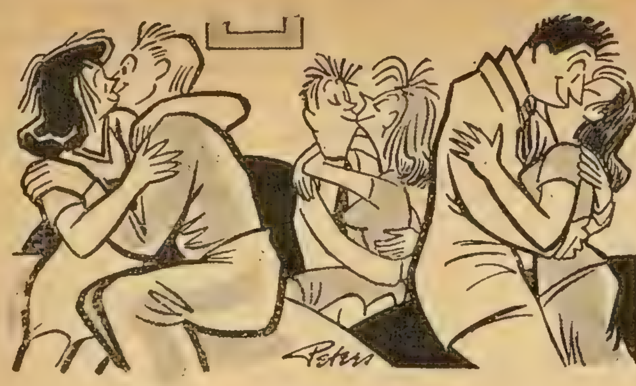

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

FUNDLE: To pet playfully.

ALUMNIGH: Graduating next month.

MALT-TITUDE: A bunch of brewers.

CLOCKNEY: A WATCHman in London's East End.

GABARDEAN: Head of a serge-ical college.

M-ODDEST-TY: Strangest kind of decency.

OSCOOLATION: A chilly kiss.

IMPEWDENT: Saucy skunk.

FASTENATING: Enchanting hooks and eyes.

NEW YORKESTRA: Guy Lombardo & Co.

the United States today is in it as well. It behooves us to understand what the issues are and to be ready with a solution for the dangerous tensions which they have produced and will produce in the future.

To reiterate, the permanent issues are oil, communications, and security. It does not matter what the UNO has done or will do. It does not matter whether Russia, momentarily, backs down or presses forward. It does not matter whether Britain unites the Arabs or divides them. Only the permanent settling of the permanent rivalries can solve the problem.

Is there a solution? Perhaps.

1. OIL. During the war, there was much talk, which seems forgotten today, about international control of resources to permit equal access to raw materials for all. If this idea were revived and implemented, the dangers of national struggles for control of oil would be eliminated.

2. COMMUNICATIONS. The conflict between Britain and Russia in the Mediterranean and Red Sea depends upon the desire of each to guard sea lanes from nationally controlled strategic bases at the same four vulnerable passages of these four passages of these inland seas. The international trusteeship system might be invoked to place impartial guards at these points to guarantee free passage for all.

3. SECURITY. The respective seeking and holding of positions in the Near East for security reasons results from the belief that every country must be prepared to protect itself by its own national forces. The solution is to substitute international for national protection—a really effective international police force for national armies.

These are the answers. But are they *acceptable* answers—to Russia, to Britain, to the United States, or to anyone else?

They imply a strengthening of international organization in the direction of real world government: an abandonment by the nations of the earth of that ultimate argument of national sovereignty, the power to wage war; an acceptance of what an official British spokesman has called an "overriding" international sovereignty.

Are the nations of the earth, fearful of one another, jealous of their own strength, willing to pay this price to end conflicts, in the Near East or anywhere else?

If they are not, it may well be that the Near East will be the point at which or for which the first blow of the next world war will be struck. It may well be this birthplace of our history which will become also the point at which we will see it begin its death agony.

THE END

GOING! GOING! GONE!

Continued from Page 23

the most likely places to find real bargains because the experts aren't always on the spot to look things over as they are in the metropolitan galleries.

Nowadays auction buyers don't have to worry very much about behind-the-scenes chicanery. All of the established salesrooms are run on an honest, aboveboard basis. And the same holds true for most country auctions. The established auctioneer has a good business and a reputation to protect. As a result, sales are conducted in a straightforward manner with little or no histrionics or urging to buy. Most auctioneers speak quietly and try to keep things moving as fast as possible. They plan to sell ninety items an hour—one every forty seconds—so it's easy to see that there's not much time for anything but a brief description of the merchandise and the bidding.

The laws governing auction procedure vary from city to city. In general, they are designed to protect both the buyer and the seller. Auctioneers, for example, are not permitted to have a marked catalogue in front of them while they are conducting a sale. This is to eliminate preconceived prices. On the other hand, the law allows an auctioneer to refuse an initial bid which he considers too low. This regulation is designed to protect the seller against a thin market and particularly against collusion among buyers. If items had to be sold no matter what the bid, it would be possible for groups of buyers to get together and agree that only one of them would bid. The one bidder could then buy at a ridiculously low price and the group could split the proceeds of a resale. This has happened many times, particularly in the case of valuable works of art where a handful of buyers constitute the whole market.

AUCTIONEERS operate in two ways. Either they sell on a straight 20-per-cent commission, or they buy the goods outright and then attempt to sell at a profit. They almost invariably do make money because the principal qualification of an auctioneer is that he be an expert at estimating the value of the great variety of things he sells.

In fact, it is this knowledge of merchandise rather than any special speaking ability which leads to an auctioneering career. Charles H. Tobias, of Tobias-Fischer, once ran a furniture business. Ashbel Green, Jr., of Silo's, deserted Wall Street for auctioneering, but he spent five years learning values before he undertook to do any selling. Otto Bernet, of Parke-Bernet, began at sixteen as a stock boy in an auction house, which gave him ample opportunity to study prices. Because a knowledge of values is so important to successful selling, auctioneers usually specialize in one particular field.

The auction business doesn't seem to be subject to the same ups and downs with which other types of businesses have to contend. During a depression, prices are lower, but there are more goods for sale. In good times there is less offered, but what there is brings higher prices. And all through the war, auctions enjoyed spirited bidding because they offered people many things which couldn't be bought at all in the stores. There was a tremendous demand for household goods with no ceiling prices on secondhand furniture. But there are ceilings on such things as toasters, fans, and clocks, and the OPA expects the auction rooms to observe them. This is accomplished by accepting bids up to the ceiling price. Sometimes as many as fifty or seventy-five persons are willing to pay up to the ceiling. In that case their names are put in a hat and a drawing conducted on the spot. The item goes to the lucky bidder whose name is drawn first. In a sense, it's an OPA-sanctioned lottery, but what else can they do?

Naturally, auctioneers are anxious to secure the best prices they can. As one says frankly, "We haven't stayed in business for sixty-eight years by giving away our clients' things." But what is a good price to an auctioneer is often a bargain price to the general public. And that brings up an extremely important factor to consider when buying at auctions — the dealers, who constitute 25 per cent of the average auction attendance.

DEALERS are sometimes responsible for making it appear that there is hocus-pocus attached to auctions. Auction sales are one of the main sources of supply for these middlemen who buy and resell all sorts of items. They flock from all over the country to attend the big city sales in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Los Angeles and, to a lesser degree, the important rural sales. Dealers are congenitally opposed to having anyone know what they pay for an article because they are going to have to put a new and higher price on it for resale.

For this reason many dealers have devised a sign language for communicating their unspoken bids to the auctioneer. Each one has his own pet and supposedly secret semaphore. One puts a cigar in his mouth to indicate a raise. As long as he keeps it there he continues to raise. When he takes it out he's through. Some pull their ears to indicate a raise, some cross and uncross their legs, some barely move their catalogue, but this is considered dangerous because it is too easily seen.

These complicated systems of sign language often make it appear that the auctioneer is picking up bids which don't exist. Actually, he's very much on his toes trying to distinguish the trick signals the dealers have told him to watch for, from the natural movements and gestures of the other people in the crowd. If an auctioneer misses one of these signals, it's just too bad for the bidder, but they persist in their wigwag just the same. One auctioneer comments with a sigh, "This business wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for the people who wave to their friends."

The secret of successful auction buying is to plan a campaign beforehand and stick to it. Make it a point to go to the presale exhibitions where all of the items are on display, and be sure to take advantage of the rights which the laws of most communities grant you as a potential buyer. You are privileged to examine all merchandise as thoroughly as you like. You are also privileged to ask questions, and the auctioneer must give you honest answers. If he misrepresents his wares, he can be forced to take them back after the sale and refund the purchase price.

Once you've decided what you want, the next step to decide is what would be a fair price to pay for it. How can you do that? Let's say that you see a chair which you estimate would cost about $80 new, because you've seen comparable ones in stores for that price. The dealers will figure that they can sell the chair secondhand for, say $45. The market for prewar construction is still good. Allowing for 100-percent mark-up, they can only bid about $22.50. If you really want the chair, plan to bid up to $25 or $27.50, and the chances are that you'll get it. If the price goes much above this, you'll be bidding against the usually uninformed general public. In general, estimate about what a piece would sell for in a shop, then set your top price at a little above half of that figure.

Bargain hunters who are handy with tools and a paintbrush should keep their eyes open for what are commonly called "stand-up" or "clean-up" sales. Many auction rooms hold these periodically to sell out damaged pieces and items.

Honest auctioneering is good business, but, as in every business, the path to fortune is not always smooth. Auctioneers' problems range from shoplifting, which is extremely difficult to prevent during the exhibitions, to the fortunately rare cases of irrational bidding. Mr. Tobias can laugh about it now, but he had a bad moment or two several months back.

DURING one of the company's regular sales a woman who had obviously had too many for lunch topped everybody's bid for everything, no matter what the price. She was just feeling right for a buying spree, with alcoholic abandon substituted for money in the bank. It wasn't until a member of the auction staff persuaded her to go out for another quick one that the sale was once again restored to decorum and reason.

On another afternoon a woman dealer who usually spent not more than a few hundred dollars bid in almost two thirds of everything sold. She was a customer of long-standing. There was no good reason to question her sincerity. Still, it did seem a bit strange. And it seemed stranger still when she failed to appear next day to pay off and take away her many purchases. Mr. Tobias learned that she had been taken to the psychopathic ward of Bellevue Hospital. He says he's willing to believe it was nothing more than an extreme case of auction fever.

THE END

Advertisement

ALL SUNDAES 16¢
WHEATIES

"Joe's in training."

Joe's training like a champion—with Wheaties, "Breakfast of Champions." Those crisp-toasted whole wheat flakes, with milk and fruit, are a training table favorite of champs like Hank Greenberg, Bob Feller, Byron Nelson. They'll be one of your favorites, too —for flavor and nourishment.

FOR STARLIT NIGHTS

Miss Saylor's Chocolates

These lovely Chocolates are made for magic moments. The flawless flavor of pure cream, fresh butter and fragrant chocolate, subtly blended by good cooks, creates for you an exquisite taste temptation.

Your dealer may have them soon, so keep trying.

French Cream Chocolates and Coffee-ets.

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ADMIRATION POCKETCHIEF
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A Man's Handkerchief
...real value...
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SOLD EXCLUSIVELY IN DRUG STORES
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CELLOPHANE-LIKE FINISH FOR FLOORS

- ELIMINATES WAXING
- EASY TO KEEP CLEAN
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No longer is it necessary to wax and scrub floors every week—simply apply PLASTI-KOTE with a brush or applicator. You'll have a glistening finish to linoleum, wood or composition floors that will last and look beautiful for months.

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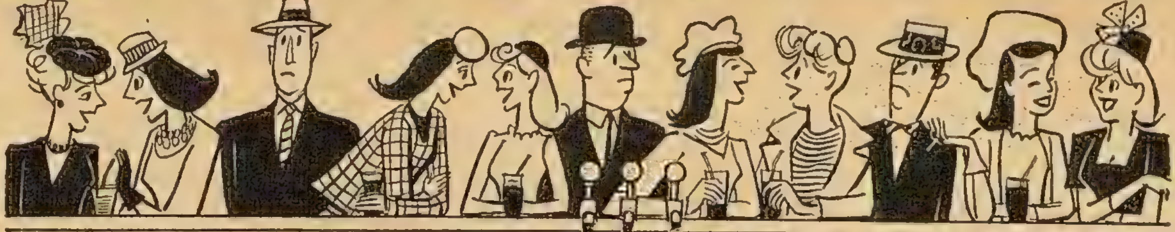
Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK



CONSUMERS, TAKE WARNING! —The Office of Price Administration has removed price control from a long list of consumer, household, and miscellaneous items, and has suspended price ceilings on others. Though all of us have groused from time to time about the OPA's shortcomings, in days to come we may well miss its dogged chaperonage of prices. For now it will be up to us to do our own comparative shopping when in the market for certain musical instruments, some household accessories, and housewares, not to mention many lines of sporting goods and clothing. Outright exemption applies to musical instruments, including pianos and organs, but excluding radios and phonographs; household accessories and housewares such as chrome or silver-plated carafes, cocktail shakers, hand-finished crystal glassware, portable ice chests, and all kitchen items sold at retail at thirty cents or less; also phonograph records and albums.

WOT, NO CEILING?

LAST CALL FOR MOTHER'S DAY

Give her a new electric toaster,
Or maybe a corpulent chromium roaster
In which to baste the family meats.
Give her some glamorous percale sheets
With which to make the family beds.
And *then*, let's hope you will use your heads
And give the lady some perfume too,
Or *something* that won't be used by you!

NATURE LOVERS: The colossal success of the thirtieth International Flower Show in New York's Grand Central Palace proves that we city slickers aren't entirely devoid of soul. The first show in four years, it packed in 250,000 during the week's run, and many more thousands would have attended if they could have squeezed their way inside. On the morning the show opened there were double lines of people two blocks long, waiting to get in. It was obvious we New Yorkers are even more stuck on flowers than on nylons! As usual, the Flower Show both thrilled and awed me—it always gives me an inferiority complex. The gardens are so magnificent, I feel frustration gripping me, and I have a nasty feeling in my bones, even before my back starts to ache from weeding, that I'll never manage to grow anything around our Maine cottage except forsythia, spiraeas, our good old rugged rambling roses, and the violets and lilacs given us by benevolent neighbors. What do I mean, frustration! I wouldn't trade our lilacs and our evergreens even for the stately Stumpp & Walter garden which won first prize in the class for gardens covering 1,200 square feet. All green and white, it featured a circle of white tulips edged with white azaleas and white dogwood against green lawn and a background of evergreens. Other gardeners like me, who lack the time, talent, and money to make gardening a career, will find comfort in the fact that experts agreed Stumpp & Walter won the prize not alone for what they put in, but for what they left out. Its exceptional charm lay in its austere simplicity. One very small exhibit by Jackson and Perkins of Newark, New York, aroused my modest ambitions. It was a tiny garden of Viola Purple Heart whose velvety purple blossoms sometimes grow to a full three inches across and have stems seven or eight inches long. Purple Heart will bloom continuously till August, when the runners should be clipped back to five or six inches. Then, lo and behold, it has a way of blooming again in protected places late in the winter, when snowdrifts are melting all around it. The growers recommend using it in a low border, as an edging for rose beds, at the foot of evergreens and in permanent mass plantings. . . . Viola Purple Heart was adopted as the official flower of the Military Order of the Purple Heart at last year's annual meeting. . . . My son's favorite Flower Show exhibit was a lawn sprinkler in action.

THE WOMAN'S ANGLE

Continued from Page 29

"But my husband wouldn't like it. He would want me to stay home."

She snubbed out her cigarette. "Men! Aren't they silly? But it's no use arguing if he feels that way. I know when I worked in a department store, the one argument we couldn't answer was if a woman returned merchandise and said her husband didn't like it."

I smiled. "Well, you see, it's that way." I put on my hat.

"Charlie never said anything to me about your being engaged. It's funny."

"Charlie doesn't know everything about me."

"I'm beginning to see that. Well, congratulations. Who's the man?"

I counted to fifteen and explained. "He's—away right now. In South America. Digging for—oil. We have to wait until he gets back."

"Naturally. What's his name?"

That was the jackpot question. But my subconscious was in fine form by that time. Without counting over five, I drew a name strictly out of my hat. "Peterson. Cedric Peterson."

It was a lovely name. It had a lovely authentic sound. I imagined Cedric as tall and blond and just a touch English. Just enough to like dinner clothes and wear tweeds well and ride motorcycles. I was growing fonder and fonder of Cedric when Helen Warren's voice broke in.

". . . when I see Charlie at dinner tonight," she was saying.

I grabbed my coat and fled. Originally, I had harbored an idea that I might go up and explain the whole thing to Charlie and we'd laugh about it. On sober second thought, I slunk home. Mom was busy burning a roast and swearing at the stove. Pop called me aside.

"Your mother and I are celebrating our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary next month," he said. "I want to get her something nice. It's the silver anniversary. Maybe a tea service. Would you shop for it?"

I snapped at Pop that a new range would be more like it. He looked shocked. "It's the sentiment of the thing," he said. "It's the silver anniversary."

I ATE the roast grimly, reflecting on the stupidity of men in general. Afterward I washed the dishes for Mom, although I'm not supposed to do it except on week-ends. Then I went up to bed and slept badly.

Charlie didn't look exactly like a man of distinction the next morning either. He needed a shave and his eyes looked like underdone poached eggs. We plunged into work. The telephone rang like mad and Charlie snapped my head off every time I let anybody get to him. Finally, at eleven o'clock, he buzzed for me.

"Shut off the telephone," he said. "Tell the switchboard to take calls. I want to talk to you."

I did as he directed. He watched me. Then he banged his fist on the desk. "Stop flying around like a butterfly. Sit down. I can't talk to you when you're jumping all over."

I considered throwing the telephone at him, but contented myself with sliding into a chair and confiding to it that it showed a man was slipping when he took his hangovers out on the hired help.

He glowered at me. "Speaking of hired help, you're supposed to be my private secretary. You're supposed to be loyal to me. What do you mean running around behind my back telling the women in the office you're going to quit and be married?"

Any other time, I would have explained. But I was mad, too. "What do you mean? I told one dame, a dame who seems to have you twisted around her little finger. Of course, it isn't any of my business, but—"

"Shut up! We're talking about you."

"That's beautiful male logic. O.K., we'll talk about me. But you don't need to yell. What's wrong if I decide to get married?" I stood up and glared. "You may think I'm just part of the furniture here, like the telephone or desk, but I know how to use a fork and I dance pretty well and there are people who think I'm —attractive."

For You...THE FINEST

It's a

GENUINE REGISTERED
Keepsake
DIAMOND RING
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She will appreciate your thoughtfulness, when you give her the most treasured of all diamond rings . . . her Keepsake, the finest and most appropriate symbol of love. True value is assured by the name "Keepsake" in the ring . . . the nationally established price on the tag . . . and the Keepsake Certificate of Guarantee and Registration. At your Keepsake Jeweler's . . . $100 to 3500.

A.	HEATHER Set	362.50
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Please send the useful 20-page book, "The Etiquette of the Engagement and Wedding" . . . a complete guide to social correctness in planning the betrothal and wedding events . . . with illustrations and prices of Keepsake Rings and the name of the nearest Keepsake Jeweler. I enclose 10c to cover mailing.

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WHEN YOUR STOMACH IS
UPSET

Don't punish your upset stomach by taking overdoses of antacids or drastic purges. Be kind to your stomach...take soothing PEPTO-BISMOL!

Pepto-Bismol is neither an antacid nor a laxative. It helps soothe irritated intestinal walls as well as calm the upset stomach...and it aids in retarding intestinal fermentation, gas formation, and simple diarrhea. Keep pleasant-tasting PEPTO-BISMOL on hand . . . always. *Get a bottle at your druggist today.* If you don't get prompt relief, consult your physician.

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Your poem will be set to music by a hit parade composer and his staff—recorded by a well-known professional radio singer—sung over radio. Lead sheet furnished. Send your poems today for free examination and our exciting offer.

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8¼ Lbs.
Save Time and Labor with a
MONTAMOWER

New model. New type metal handle has special device to adjust cutting height. Drive shaft now mounted on free rolling, factory lubricated, and sealed ball bearings. No tired backs or aching arms. 8¼ lbs. of live precision made mechanism that first gathers, then cuts smoothly a clean 16" swath through grass, dandelions, spike grass and weeds. No noise or clatter. As modern and efficient as your electric razor. Cuts right up to walls, fences, trees or posts; leaves no fringes to be trimmed by hand. Cutters are self-sharpening. Built to last many years. Many thousands in use. Sold direct from factory. Costs little. Write at once for guarantee information and literature.

MONTAMOWER DISTRIBUTING CO.
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The speech ended on a weak note. I felt foolish. The next thing I knew Charlie was standing in the middle of the room kissing me. Just like the movies. Boss and secretary. All the scene needed was for somebody, preferably Helen Warren, to walk in. I jerked myself away.

"Thanks for the pass, but I wasn't really complaining. Anyway, I prefer my passes outside working hours. It's less cheapening."

Charlie's face turned white. I could see that he was mad.

"Charlie—" I said.

"Yes?" His voice was tight.

"Charlie, this is all silly. I don't know what Helen Warren told you, but I'm not going to get married right away. Anyway, Cedric is down in South America."

He shot a quick glance at me. "Cedric? That's funny."

Cedric didn't sound quite so good to me as he had yesterday, especially the way Charlie said his name. But I was stuck with Cedric. For a while anyway. Later, maybe, I could shove him into an alligator's mouth or drop him out of an airplane. My South American background was fuzzy. "Cedric Peterson," I said firmly. "He's English, you know. And Swedish. The last name is Minneapolis."

SUDDENLY Charlie patted my arm and dropped a kiss on my nose. "You're a sweet idiot," he said.

"What'll I do now?" I asked.

"Do?" Charlie laughed. "You'll get to work. I've spent enough time worrying about your love life. Get out of this office and close the door and sit like a dragon in front of it and don't allow anybody in. I'm going to work like hell all afternoon."

"What about lunch?" I asked.

"Sandwiches. Get 'em sent in. For you, too. And some candy bars. I owe you those." He paused and looked at me. "What did you think of Helen Warren's campaign?"

I shrugged. "I'm not an advertising copywriter. I'm just a dame who cooks on Mom's old stove and struggles with it because Pop is so sentimental he wants to get her a silver service for their twenty-fifth anniversary."

Charlie looked startled. "What are you talking about?"

"Nothing," I explained carefully, "except that Mom and I would both love to be executives in the kitchen with a lot of fancy buttons to push. How are you going to do it unless you sell Pop? And how can you sell Pop? He and Mom have their twenty-fifth anniversary coming up and he wants to buy her a tea service. If you ask me, you ought to invent an electric-appliance anniversary."

"In other words, you don't like Miss Warren's copy?"

"I like it all right, as copy. But as a plain ordinary little woman who—"

"That's all I wanted to know. Get out. I'm rewriting it. I had a hunch it was all wrong, but I didn't know why."

I put my hand on the doorknob. "It's just that no woman has any real sales resistance against all those lovely things. It's just that—"

"Meredith," he shouted, "get out! You're ruining a triple-plate brillium inspiration!"

I didn't mind Charlie's yelling at me. He always does when he is working. And it gave me quiet satisfaction to tell Helen Warren three times, twice on the telephone and once in person, that Keep Out meant her, too. I sat there at my desk being a perfect watchdog and dreaming up a nice little plot in my mind about Charlie and me working far into the night, me typing copy, Charlie being grateful. Then, maybe, over a cocktail before a late dinner, I could explain about Cedric and everything would be fine again.

But at five-fifteen my rosy bubble exploded. I went into Charlie's office to make helpful noises, and he told me abruptly that he was nearly finished and I was to go home. That was rude enough, but he called out just as I got to the door: "Before you leave, tell Helen Warren I want her to come right up."

I had already broken my date for the evening, so it meant another night with the family looking curiously at me and wondering if they were rearing an old maid. The only way of getting privacy was to pretend I was coming down with a cold. I took to my bed surrounded by hot lemonade and mystery stories. Mom scolded me a little about candy bars, saying that if I ate properly, I wouldn't have so many sniffles. But she left me alone presently to go to the movies with Pop, and I had plenty of time to think. I had messed up my life just fine. I had gotten myself engaged to a gent who didn't exist; I had ruined any chances I might have of a career at Johnson & Thomas; and I had relegated myself to a quiet typist's seat by the side of the road watching Charlie rewrite Helen Warren's copy and make expert passes at her.

I WAKENED again with that lovely refreshed feeling of having been socked on the head. I told Mom my cold was better, but she insisted on tucking me into an unbecoming wool jersey dress. Charlie was late, so I occupied myself throwing most of his mail away and halfheartedly hunting for the copy he had written yesterday. There was a Plans board meeting at ten-thirty and I knew he would want to have it typed and ready to present for that. The copy eluded me.

At ten-fifteen I understood why. Charlie turned up with it under his arm in an envelope. He had taken it home to work on some more, he explained. I grunted there wasn't time to type it before the meeting.

Charlie said, "I never knew what it was to have anything typed for me when I worked on a newspaper," and started upstairs. About eleven o'clock the telephone rang and Mr. Johnson's secretary said that Charlie wanted me right away in the conference room.

The door to the conference room was closed, but Mr. Johnson's secretary told me to go right in. Holding my pad and pencil at what I hoped was an efficient angle, I tiptoed into the room. About twelve people were gathered around a long table with Mr. Johnson at the head. Charlie motioned for me to sit down in a vacant chair beside him. I was pleased, until I realized that Helen Warren was on my other side.

AFTER my eyes became accustomed to the wonder and dazzle of it all, my ears began to take in the fact that Mr. Johnson was talking about the electrical-equipment campaign. With a polite Old World bow to Helen, he explained that she had been selected to do the honors of writing because she had the woman's point of view. Helen continued to stare directly in front of her. Charlie was jittering and his ears were pink. Mr. Johnson went on to explain how important the campaign was, because it was the first one for a new client. Miss Warren had prepared a campaign. Then—h'mmm—Charlie, Mr. Barnes, had felt that—h'mmm—Miss Warren didn't have quite the angle. He had prepared another campaign. Miss Warren, however, had felt so strongly that her campaign represented the—h'mmm—woman's point of view that she had asked that both be presented for discussion. Now if Charlie—Mr. Barnes—would take over—

Charlie's voice was harsh with nervousness. I didn't understand. Then I began to see something in the way he avoided Helen Warren's eyes. The copy I had prepared for her, original and four carbons, was stacked on the table in front of her. His yellow paper originals were in front of him. I suddenly decided that maybe Charlie had worked alone last night.

"Miss Warren asked—" Charlie said.

Helen's voice was sharp, although she laughed. "I didn't ask. I demanded, even if Charlie is the boss. I was hired here as the woman's expert. I think I know more about advertising to women than he does. Besides, in my opinion, his angle is —corny. It isn't smart. I'd be ashamed to work on it. For the good of the agency—I know Mr. Barnes isn't angry with me."

Suddenly the nervousness seemed to fall away from Charlie. He looked around the room, particularly at Mr. Johnson, and grinned. "I think Miss Warren has done some great work on our cosmetic accounts. But I don't think she has a feeling for this. The reason I believe in my campaign is because it came from a woman who has."

Helen was gripping the arm of her chair so tightly that the knuckles showed white. I couldn't keep my eyes off them. "Let's get on with this," she said. "Each campaign ought to be judged on its own merits."

He leaned forward and his eyes met hers and I hastily got back out of the current of ice. "I'm sorry," he said, "but first I want the woman who is responsible for my campaign to get credit." He smiled at me.

"Meredith," he said, "stand up and take a bow. You gave me the theme: 'If you want a happy wife, electrify each anniversary.' "

My face flushed and my hands began to shake. All I could do was look at Charlie in amazement. He patted my arm and the contact made me shiver. Moments of triumph are supposed to be wonderfully sweet, but I couldn't concentrate on anything but Charlie's pat. The copy was passed around the table. I didn't read Helen's, I had already seen too much of that. But when Charlie's campaign came back around to him, I took it and looked at it. Like everything Charlie writes, it was simple as A-B-C. It gave a list of anniversaries—paper, straw, candy, leather, wooden, and so on. But then it ended with the statement that those were old-fashioned customs, and if you wanted to really please your wife, you would make each anniversary an electrical one. After what seemed like a couple of eons, Mr. Johnson cleared his throat.

"I think in all fairness we should take a vote, a showing of hands. We shall designate Miss Warren's campaign as A and Mr. Barnes' as B. Now, please, all those in favor of A—"

The B's won in a walk. Helen Warren rose to her feet and shrugged. "All right, I was wrong. But, Charlie, in spite of all those hours and nights you've spent trying to get me to appreciate the common touch, I still don't like that campaign. I won't do any good if I work on it. Why don't you let Meredith? She wants to be a copywriter."

SHE left the room, closing the door behind her. I got up too. "Charlie," I said. Then I remembered where I was and blushed. "Mr. Barnes, you don't need me any more, so—"

"Wait a minute, Meredith." Mr. Johnson beamed at me. "You are young but you seem to show promise. Miss Warren says you want to be a copywriter. I think we might add you to the staff and, under Mr. Barnes' supervision, you could finish the campaign and do the booklets and trade advertising. Our policy is always to advance people from within our ranks."

I tried to dither my thanks, but the words wouldn't untangle in my throat. Then, distinctly, I heard Charlie say, "That's nice of you, Mr. Johnson, but Meredith isn't going to be a career woman. She is leaving to be married. In fact, it was because she is so interested in a home that she had the idea for this campaign."

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I had forgotten all about Cedric. I guess Helen had too. I was so mad that all I could do was make noises, which they took for girlish shyness, while the Plans board congratulated me and agreed that Woman's Place Was in the Home. Finally Charlie said I could be excused.

Feeling hot and nasty, I closed Charlie's door and lurked in wait for him. I could see the word flying around the advertising agency that I was going to be married. I could imagine the girls planning showers for me, and little surprises. It was awful. My mind was in a rat race. If the whole thing ever came out, I would be laughed out of the place. The only thing I could do was quit. But first I was going to tell Charlie off.

It was long after one before he came downstairs.

"Baby," he said, "we pulled it off! I was sure we were right, but you never know."

"You pulled it off," I said. "You pulled it off and pulled me down on top of it. Now I'll never get a chance to be a copywriter."

"Nuts! Why do you want to work in an office when you can—"

"A woman's Place Is in the Home," I quoted. "That's O.K., Charlie, only there isn't going to be any home—for me and Cedric, I mean."

Charlie put the campaign down on his desk. "Now, darling, you can't do that to old Cedric. I won't permit it."

I stamped my foot. "What business is it of yours?"

"Why, Cedric is an old friend of mine. Why do you think I was so pleased? I've known him for years. I even have his book."

"Book?" I said stupidly.

He went to the bookcase behind his desk and pulled out a thin volume bound in purple. "There! Of course he was young when he did this, but I do like the title."

I PICKED up the book. Its title was Poems of Passion. It was in gold. So was the author's name. Cedric Peterson. I closed my eyes and opened them. The book was still there. So was Cedric's name. Then my subconscious came out and blushed. Taking dictation, I had stared at the bookcase behind Charlie's desk by the hour. Unconsciously I must have memorized the names of the authors. No wonder I had connected Cedric with romance. Poems of Passion.

I dropped the volume hastily. "This is awful," I said.

"Not so awful. Pretty young and sappy, but they show fine feeling. Of course, Meredith, he was young when he wrote them. How did you meet him?"

"Charlie," I said, "listen hard. I don't care whether Cedric is an old friend of yours. I don't care whether he's your great-aunt or your favorite uncle. To hell with Cedric!"

Charlie put his arm around me. "As I said before, you can't do that to old Cedric. I won't permit it. Neither will he. He's not the kind of man to take jilting lightly. You're just upset."

"Upset? I'm out of my head. Any chance of a career I ever had is wrecked, and you sit here telling me I'm just upset!"

SUDDENLY I was crying. Not like a lady, either. I was howling. Everything was too much for me, the board meeting, my big chance, the let-down. And now Charlie's arm around me. I put my head on his shoulder. I wanted to die.

Charlie kept patting my back, the way you do a baby to make him burp. Finally I ran out of tears. Charlie lifted my chin in his hands.

"Honey, hold your hat. Pull yourself together. Cedric Peterson is going to hold you to that promise to marry him. I know, because—I'm Cedric Peterson."

My mind had taken more than it could digest.

"You see, baby, when I was in college I was young and foolish, too. I had a private life. I wrote poetry. But I was smart enough, when my English professor found a publisher for me, to use an assumed name. I guess I thought, too, that Cedric Peterson was more romantic than Charlie Barnes."

"You wrote that book!" Somehow, that seemed the most incredible thing of all in a whirling world. "You wrote Poems of Passion?"

Charlie's ears got red. "It's not as bad as all that. Sometimes, after we're married, I'll let you read it. As a matter of fact, between you and me, I'm not an unpassionate fellow."

To prove it, he kissed me. After a long time I shook myself and raised my head.

"Charlie, you knew all the time I was lying to Helen Warren."

"I didn't know until you mentioned the name of your boy friend. I spent a pretty bad night after she told me you were going to be married. I guess I've been in love with you for a long time."

I faced him. I believe in the principle that people should get everything straight before marriage, and start fresh. "Then why were you chasing around with Helen Warren?"

"Chasing around with her? I was just spending every waking hour trying to pound some common sense into her. She's all right on cosmetics but too chi-chi for most of our accounts. It was purely business."

I put my head back on his shoulder."

He cradled his chin in my neck. "You're not going to mind not working? Honest?"

For once in my life I stole a line of Helen Warren's copy. "When my husband says he doesn't like it, that's one argument to which there's no answer."

So Charlie kissed me again.

THE END

TOO BUSY FOR LOVE

Continued from Page 37

Barry tried to focus on his words. But he was remembering the country house which had seemed more actual when he and Natalie used to talk about it than recently. He had bought a great many bonds, which he considered it a duty to hold, and had abandoned discussion of the country house.

The lieutenant was saying, "But Sara insisted we go ahead as if life *were* secure; have a home, family—everything. She used to say that if I could fight Japs in tropical jungles, she could farm and raise a baby in the temperate zone." He laughed. "I ought to be combing the town for a room to stay in, but the bus might arrive and I not be here! However, if Sara, the baby, and I have to hold our family reunion on a park bench, she will only say, 'It is a pleasant night to watch the stars.' Women are so wonderful."

"But you cannot sit on a park bench with a wife and a year-old daughter!" Barry said.

He was thinking, It is growing very late in New York. By the time I have talked to Quentin, and he has talked to Natalie and telephoned me thereafter, it will be morning.

The lieutenant was regarding him with a puzzled expression. Barry seized his arm. "Come along. I shall introduce you to the manager. I have a suite here. You take it overnight."

Barry did not tell two untruths a twelvemonth. He now perpetrated his second of the day, which had begun an endless time before, it seemed, with his statement that Natalie had influenza.

"I am obliged to work all night," he told the lieutenant. "We are reconverting a factory."

HE found the manager. Then unbelievably his call came through. The long-distance operator said, "Please limit your call to five minutes." Quentin's familiar voice was scarcely recognizable.

Barry talked first; but, even so, it required nearly four of the five minutes to sum up the contents of Natalie's letter, to say that he, Barry, wished Quentin to urge her to come to Seattle immediately, and to telephone him after he had talked to her.

When he had finished, there was silence for some seconds. "Haven't I made myself clear?" Barry asked.

Quentin spoke slowly. "Yes, entirely clear, except—"

"Except what?" demanded Barry.

"Natalie did not mention that I am in love with her and want to marry her?"

In that most shocking instant of his life, Barry felt absolutely nothing; knew with terrible sureness that he could not afford emotion yet.

As in that curiously vivid light, that brief calm which precedes a storm, the outlines of objects are oddly sharpened, so were his perceptions. He thought, I must find words to reach through to Quentin until I have time, until I decide how to meet disaster. And simultaneously seeing through the glass door of the booth the lieutenant, a blonde girl on one arm, a redheaded child in the crook of the other, Barry told himself, "The boy has brought his wife to thank me. I shall have to be polite to them."

He spoke to Quentin forcefully. "Don't tell Natalie you told me," he said. "It's *her* right to tell me or not," and added, "I shall write you tomorrow."

Barry hung up with no "good-by," stepped out of the booth, met Mrs. Maitland (that turned out to be her name), never remembered what he said to her, but assumed it was adequate.

Some minutes later he was seated on a park bench shivering, though the night was warm for the time of year. He was shivering with rage at Quentin, at Natalie.

Did that girl Sara Maitland have a look of her? Not particularly, except that both were blonde. It was

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WHAT AN EASY-RIDING BLADE. SAY, A SHAVE LIKE THIS SURE GIVES A FELLOW A LIFT
I KNEW YOU'D LIKE IT. THAT'S A THIN GILLETTE
M-M-M-M. GOOD-LOOKING
HAVE SOMETHING COOL, CAPTAIN?
YES, THANK YOU W-H-Y ???
??? YOU MUST KNOW MY SISTER. THAT'S HER PICTURE
DON'T TELL ME YOU ARE BILL WALDON WHO PLAYED FOOTBALL AT TEXAS "U"
WILL YOU BE HERE SATURDAY, JANE, WHEN I COME FOR MY HORSE?
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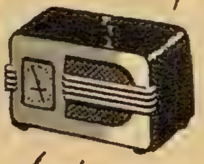

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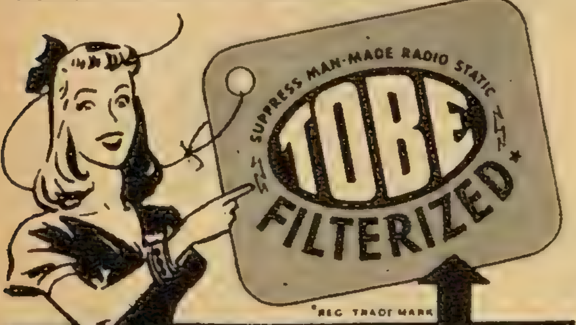

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only that he saw Natalie everywhere, and always would. The red-headed baby was sturdy and handsome. *He* had wanted children. So had Natalie. But he had not wanted to tie her down, not with his absences so frequent, things so unsettled.

"Go ahead as if life *were* secure, have a home, family—everything."

Lieutenant Maitland, of course, quoting his wife!

Rage left Barry as suddenly as it had swept him. He was again clear-headed, but tired. Was Quentin to blame for loving her, since she was lovely? Was Natalie to blame, left to "amuse" herself?

Or was he, Barry Chandler, to blame for—for what?

Suddenly Barry saw, vivid as Natalie's face, a fact!

He had gone on, in his work, in his life, to increasing competence, accomplishment, or success, as one chose to phrase it. He had given Natalie no chance to go on to her own accomplishment, her own maturity. Lieutenant Maitland had been wiser in his marriage.

Then something in him, dogged and strong, stirred, was even faintly comforting. He would fight for his marriage, the future he had used to take for granted! Because Natalie was worth fighting for! Because he loved her and she had loved him.

Toward morning in the deserted hotel lobby he finished a short letter to her, wrote a paragraph to Quentin Wyatt, mailed both notes.

BARRY'S letter to Natalie lay on the table between her and Quentin in their favorite cocktail room, quiet so early in the afternoon.

It read:

"My dear,

"We have been married five years. I want us to be married forever, because though the facts as you write them are true—that we spend less time together, make fewer plans, and so on—your conclusions are mistaken. I never have ceased to care for you. I blame myself for letting you doubt those things.

"I have only one favor to ask—that you give me five weeks for the sake of the five years. My work ends here in a month at most. After your letter, my first impulse was to fly East, or have you join me here immediately. But our marriage is too important to discuss in any hasty meeting between business conferences.

"That is why I am asking for the five weeks, a month for you to wait (with your mind not quite made up, darling, if you can manage that), then two or three days in which to talk together, in which I might try to convince you that everything we ever wanted is still there for us.

"If I fail, of course I will not try to hold you.

"With all my love, which you always have had.

"BARRY."

Natalie repeated to Quentin something she had said when she read the letter to him. "I must give him the five weeks. He has never asked me for many favors." She added now, "I hate to see you looking so unhappy."

Quentin's smile was somewhat ironic. "It would distress you as much to see Barry looking unhappy. You don't like hurting people. But in situations like this, someone gets hurt."

"Maybe that's why they aren't supposed to arise—the situations, I mean."

He added up: "In five weeks I shall be on a plane bound for South America. You will not have started divorce proceedings. They take time."

"I know. I read an article. Nevada, six weeks; Arkansas, ninety days; Mexico only a minute, but only medium thorough. Florida, ninety. The rest I forget. Maybe a medium-thorough one would be all right."

QUENTIN wondered whether if he showed Natalie the letter from Barry in his pocket she might be persuaded not to wait five weeks.

The sentences in Barry's note repeated themselves in his mind:

"Dear Quentin,

"I do not intend to discuss my reaction to your statement that you have fallen in love with Natalie and wish to marry her, except to say that I shall try to convince her she should remain married to me.

"You and I have known each other a long time, rather well. On the basis of my knowledge of you, I don't believe you will feel justified in telling Natalie that you informed me of a fact which for her own always excellent reasons she chose not to mention, particularly since I again request you not to do so."

"We are very quiet," Natalie said. "Most days we have so much about which to talk."

"We shall again, Natalie. It is only that Barry's letter, arriving as the date of my expedition is finally set, is a complication."

Was it for Natalie's sake or to save Barry's own pride that he made that request? Quentin wondered, and answered himself: It was principally for Natalie's sake. If Barry succeeded in patching up his marriage, he would not want Natalie to feel humiliated by his knowledge of something she never might have told him.

The narrow table seemed to widen, Natalie to be much farther away. Quentin said, "You do love me, therefore five weeks are not important, since we shall have the rest of time together. Natalie, please say you love me."

"I do love you, Quentin. Just now that seems one fact among many."

"It is the sole important fact, Natalie."

"Mostly, I believe that too."

THERE were hours when Natalie and Quentin dined, danced, and retrieved in some measure the delight in each other's presence, the easiness of laughter they had known before they admitted being in love and just afterward; before Barry made his request for five weeks' time. There were other hours so strained that they verged on quarreling.

In a cab, returning from a play they had not enjoyed because it presented a problem like their own, Quentin said, "We *would* quarrel tonight, except that you won't."

She smiled at him somewhat wanly. "No, I won't. Quarrels don't clear the air, like thunderstorms. They only increase fogginess."

"Do you know what you mean, Natalie?"

She shook her head. "I am only talking against time, postponing the moment when you will ask me again."

"I'll ask you now and get it over. Why not skip it all and run away to South America with me, getting a Mexican divorce en route?"

She touched his arm. "You can't help it, can you? It's because you are leaving in ten days now. You worry in case Barry exercises some kind of hypnotic influence over me which makes me forget your name, address, that your hair is black and your profile fascinating—"

"That's right. Run away from the point as fast as you can, Natalie."

"I was trying to," she admitted.

"Why should he demand two or three days to talk to you?" Quentin asked.

"Because he *wants* two or three days to talk to me, as you *want* me to dash off to South America."

"You *are* conventional, Natalie."

"If that is supposed to make me cross, it doesn't. I won't go to South America in a premarital trousseau charged to my husband's account, or another purchased by you, as you offered last time we discussed this. I won't play such a shabby trick on Barry as to run off at all, or live with you like some character in a Technicolor picture introduced to sing plaintively now and then and be abandoned in the last sequence. I am conventional, respectable, *orderly.*"

"Barry knows that too," Quentin spoke with exasperation. "He knows perfectly well you are not capable of infidelity."

Her blue eyes widened. "I should hope he knows that," she said.

They arrived at the entrance to her apartment.

"Can we talk about—just anything for a little while?" she said.

But a letter in Barry's handwriting lay in the vestibule.

"One of his regular weekly numbers ignoring the whole situation, and hoping you are having a lovely time," Quentin said.

"If I don't read Barry's letters to you, or at least summarize them, it makes you feel I am conducting some sort of conspiracy with him. If I do sum them up, you tell me how dull they are."

"I'm sorry. I know I am difficult. But so is the situation. Well, get the reading over, Natalie."

Natalie summarized. "The weather is foggy but not cold. Barry made a trip to Vancouver. . . . One more thing," she hesitated. "Barry has his reservation home. He will arrive Sunday, December sixteenth."

"Four days after my departure," Quentin mentioned.

"Then Barry and I talk, and when we've finished, we all know where we are at." Natalie's cheerful tone was definitely forced.

Quentin began to ask, "Don't you know now?" and caught the words back. His own occasional impatience was making her uncertain, even though she understood his love for her caused it.

Natalie regarded him unhappily, wondering why she had suppressed one small item in Barry's letter, "I have a belated birthday gift for you, which I hope will be complete by the time I get home."

She said abruptly, "These weeks give one too much time to think of all sorts of things."

Then she shrugged and managed to smile. "Pay no attention to my bad mood, Quentin. I am tired this evening."

After the door had closed behind Quentin, Natalie sat for some minutes looking at the door. Some day soon they would walk through doors together, with all their separate lives shut away behind them.

But *could* they close a door upon five years?

Other people did so, or else pretended they did!

She told herself, "Everyone has doubts sometimes, and—I *am* tired."

ONLY the arrangements for that "birthday present" brought Barry any solace during the weeks that followed.

The present had come to him as inspiration the day after Lieutenant and Mrs. Maitland and their baby had occupied his hotel suite.

Barry happened to be dining with an elderly business acquaintance who was a lifelong resident of Seattle. Walking with Barry, the man paused outside an old mansion in the process of being wrecked.

"The marble mantel was brought from New England around Cape Horn by clipper ship," he said.

A half-formed idea clarified in Barry's mind.

"It's a handsome mantel. I should like to buy it to take back to New England."

He decided he had abandoned truth-telling permanently. "My wife and I are building a country house in the Berkshires," he said, and caught at another fringe of the idea. "Near the Howells. Dane Howell is an architect, not my kind of architect. He builds houses. He has gone in recently for prefabricated stuff."

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That night Barry wrote Dane Howell, air mail, special delivery, and at length, requesting that he buy some land for him and erect thereupon a house, using as much prefabricated stuff as possible, because the house was to be complete in a month for a birthday present for his, Barry's wife.

The house was not to seem prefabricated, and must incorporate a fine century-old marble mantel he had just purchased.

(Barry's insistence on making arrangements for the purchase of that mantel immediately after dinner had puzzled his hosts.)

Barry listed everything which he could remember Natalie ever had mentioned wanting around a country house, from a brook which might one day he dammed for a pool, to an apple orchard which would bloom in spring.

Howell found for him an existent house, mentioning that in the time available, to construct and equip as elaborate a new one as Barry seemed to want was impossible, even with the aid of prefabrication.

Whenever Howell grew plaintive by letter or telegram as to the difficulty of obtaining copper pipe or hot-water boilers or kitchen equipment to modernize the almost nonexistent plumbing and heating system of the house, Barry wrote him to use his own samples. He had discovered, to Howell's sorrow, that Howell's factory contained an assortment of model prefabricated houses complete with baths, kitchens, and furnaces.

Assorted snapshots of his house and land arriving, Barry was delighted to discover he owned a large barn, a fact Howell had neglected to mention. In the snapshots the apple orchard was not, of course, blooming, since it was mid-November when Barry requested Howell to have the photographs taken, but it seemed to be sizable. Barry owned other trees "including maple and some evergreens, and a garden containing lilacs, peonies, and other old-fashioned shrubs," Howell summed up.

Howell then had caused his secretary to underline: *"The grounds have been neglected but cannot be put in order in a month or until spring, because there will soon be snow."*

Too bad, thought Barry, and was assailed by one of those moods against which he fought, moods of feeling that by spring, Natalie would be long gone from him, would never live in the house at any season, would not even care to look at it.

With a certain reluctance, he had abandoned the idea of furnishing the house in the next fortnight. Natalie might enjoy choosing things for it.

"I WOULD not go through the last month again for double the money," Howell told his wife.

"It *has* been rather exciting," she disagreed. "I am anxious to meet the wife who inspired such a marvelous birthday present."

Because Barry had mentioned that the house was to surprise Natalie, Mrs. Howell had addressed her invitation to dine, following their inspection tour, to Barry in Seattle and had received from him an acceptance.

THE last days before Quentin's departure raced. He and Natalie abandoned discussion of problems and pretended a gaiety they did not feel.

They came to the "lasts." The last cocktail at their favorite bar, last dinner at the Chateau Club, last theater, last dance together. "The last until you join me in South America," Quentin said once or twice, and Natalie nodded.

They were at LaGuardia Airport and the "last" minutes were hurrying by as the motors of the air liner were being warmed up, before Natalie asked herself, "The last ever, just possibly?"

"I hate to leave you with everything to settle by yourself," Quentin said, and held her hand tight.

"It's all right. Everything will be settled quickly," she told him. "I'll write you as soon as Barry and I have talked."

They had said the same things in the taxi en route to the airport, and over a last cup of coffee, and now at the plane gate.

They said, "I love you, I love you," rather desperately. The words were only meaningless words, said against the announcer's "Loading at Gate Number Seven. . . . Flight number . . ."

The mist in Natalie's eyes or behind her eyes cleared.

She saw clearly Quentin's handsome, gay, reckless face; felt his arm tighten around her, felt his quick kiss.

"Don't forget me, Natalie."

"I won't ever forget you, Quentin."

BARRY CHANDLER arrived at LaGuardia Airport very early on Sunday morning.

Sometimes, as the air liner moved steadily eastward, small details involving his final arrangements had harassed him. If he arrived late, would there be time to drive to the Berkshires, see the house, and dine with the Howells? If it happened to be raining or snowing in New York, how would it be possible to drive at all?

He knew these were ridiculously trivial worries; if his flight arrived late or the weather were bad, he had only to telephone the Howells and put off seeing the house for another day. But worrying about weather and a time schedule served to distract him from his deepest anxiety—that Natalie would not understand what he had meant by this belated birthday present of a house and land.

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for her viewing had been the most romantic gesture of his life.

He would never be able to say to Natalie, "This house and orchard and barn, these trees and fields are supposed to stand for the years I want us to share, for the plans we used to make which I only postponed, never forgot."

He did not know how to make romantic speeches.

Either Natalie would understand what he had meant the house to symbolize, or she would think he was simply trying to repay neglect by a lavish last-minute gift, a sort of bribe!

His flight arrived on time. The weather was cloudless. The day would be perfect for a winter drive.

Barry telephoned Natalie that he would reach their apartment in thirty or forty minutes. (He had not wired his arrival time in advance in case she should feel obliged to meet him and not want to!)

She said, "Hello. There you are."

He said, "Hello. Did I wake you?"

She said, "No. I was waiting for your call."

He told her he would arrive in half an hour. She told him breakfast would be ready.

On his way into New York Barry thought, I won't be able to say one word to her that means anything, until she sees the house and I know how she feels.

AS she waited for him Natalie thought, I dread having to make conversation over breakfast, as if Barry were a stranger seated opposite in a Pullman diner with whom one exchanges a few polite observations as to scenery. Yet one can't say, "Will you have more coffee? When may I leave you?"

She thought he looked very tired; he thought she looked thin.

When they were seated across from each other, Natalie began, "Barry, I'm sorry—" and stopped.

Barry ignored that. "What are your plans for today, Natalie?"

Her clear eyes widened.

"Plans?" she asked. "I didn't make any plans."

He plunged. "We might drive to the country," and stumbled on with an explanation sounding as incredible to his own ears as, he judged from Natalie's expression, it sounded to hers; that he was obliged to see the Howells, whom she did not know, on some business which had arisen during his Seattle trip.

"I thought on the way back you and I might talk," he finished lamely.

Her eyes searched his face a moment longer.

Feeling guilty (of what, however, he did not know), Barry said, "I ordered the car brought around at ten o'clock. Can you be ready?"

Suddenly she smiled. "Barry, *what* are you *not* telling me?"

Well! He never could deceive her, never had tried. He said gruffly, "That you are thinner. Hurry and dress, Natalie."

She was dressed quickly, in a blue wool frock, a blue scarf tied over her hair, and carrying an opossum coat.

In the car, driving north along the river, the strain lessened between them. Perhaps they were both remembering other drives when there had been no strain.

Once Barry asked, "Do you mind postponing whatever we must discuss until later today? I do have a reason."

"I don't mind, Barry." Natalie settled back. "I'm liking this drive."

There was more snow on the ground every few miles as they drove northward. Barry wondered whether the snow would add to or detract from the charm of the house.

The towns and villages grew farther apart. The highway cut between empty fields and scattered farmhouses.

"Almost straight north, straight to Canada," Natalie said, and turned to look at him.

Barry remembered, as he knew Natalie was remembering, a summer journey they had taken to Quebec, driving along this same road.

Barry had obtained from Howell an exact description of the turn-off to the house. It was not very much farther.

Howell had said he was sending a man to have fires going; had suggested, "He'll show you around. We shall wait at our own place for you to come along to dinner."

There was a crossroads, an ice pond, a frozen brook, a side road up a hillside. The side road was newly cleared of snow.

He turned. A mile from the turning would be the house.

THERE it stood, handsomer than in the pictures. Barry could not drive any farther. He stopped the car. White pillars against mellow brick, evergreens with snow on the branches, the bare apple orchard stretching down a hillside. Blue smoke was rising from the chimneys.

He spoke steadily: "There is your birthday present, Natalie—the house. It has a mantel which went to Seattle by clipper ship."

She caught his arm. Her cheeks were bright pink, her eyes shining.

"What on earth are you talking about?"

"A silly idea of mine. I know you won't want it. But would you do something for me, Natalie? Go look around it. There is a man — the Howells' man—to let you in. I'll join you in a little while."

Her hand dropped from his arm. She got out of the car, walked to the front door of the house.

Barry saw her reach for the knocker, saw the door open, and close behind her. For his life, he could not have entered that house with her and watched her face, in case—in case she did not care—in case she was dismayed, regretful that he had gone to so much trouble.

He waited what seemed to him a

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long time before he followed her.

The Howells' man admitted him, said, "Mrs. Chandler is upstairs."

Barry stood in his own front hall. There was the smell of wood fire burning, a curved staircase.

He went into the big living room, where the marble mantel looked solid and permanent, as if it had never been anywhere else. There was paneling, there was a view of rolling countryside.

In a bare beautifully proportioned room above, where another fire burned, Natalie regarded the same view.

But she did not see it. For the last time, perhaps, vividly, she saw Quentin Wyatt's face, his laughing amber-brown eyes. She heard his voice say, "Don't forget me, Natalie"; her own voice answering, "I won't ever forget you, Quentin."

She would not forget him, quite. But had she known, even then, that "good-by" *had* been final? Or had she known when she saw Barry's face this morning that she could not shut away the hopes and the promises of five years; known by Barry's inability to tell her so that he still loved her deeply?

The house! Barry's wonderful, absurd, romantic birthday gift. It was a beautiful house, she supposed. When she was less breathless with emotion she wanted to go through it with him, because now she knew that Barry had meant it for "This is how I feel about you."

She waited until she was sure she would not weep.

Then she went downstairs to where Barry stood by the window. He turned.

Natalie said, "I wish that I had managed as we were driving north to get the words said—that underneath my foolish restlessness and confusion I never could stop loving you, Barry. The house does not matter at all."

All his efforts over it were in that instant repaid.

He said, "You'll have a great deal of trouble furnishing it."

She said, "There are things I should tell you."

"No, Natalie, don't tell me anything except that you like the house and we'll live in it together." He added, rather desperately, "I am so clumsy with words."

She lifted her head then. Her eyes were still bright with tears, but she laughed softly. "You and I should not need words, Barry. But if we do, we have years now again in which to find them."

His arms were round her. Her golden head was against the rough tweed of his overcoat. After a while she murmured, "It is the most perfect house."

"Well, show it to me, darling. I've only seen this room."

They made a thorough inspection hand in hand and were extremely late to dinner at the Howells'.

THE END

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IF YOU HIT THE ROAD

Continued from Page 21

a 40-per-cent increase, most of it caused by stopping at a hotel instead of a motor court. But unless you want to sleep in your car, you'll make reservations at hotels, too.

Finally, pack your car lightly. The problem of getting womenfolk and their luggage stowed away with enough room left over for the driver hasn't changed since prewar days. You can try telling your wife how weak the tires are and that the load must, therefore, be light. I did that this year and it worked swell. We left at home one blue chiffon evening dress.

WITH the car packed there comes another problem. It is infinitely more important today than it used to be to co-ordinate the family's need for rest rooms with your gasoline purchases. This is achieved only through a precise balance of meticulous navigating, subtle suggestion, and mind reading.

Most drivers like to fill up the gas tank and start out in the morning with a real prospect of two or three hours of uninterrupted driving. Whole families can agree on the desirability of holding steadfastly to this efficient practice with two bathrooms less than twenty feet away. But once in the car, something happens. A physiological change occurs in everybody but the driver. Comes the invariable request, "George, will you please stop at the next clean-looking ladies' room?" Par for this remark is forty minutes after take-off, when, George was assured, everyone was comfortable and confident of remaining that way for hours.

This didn't make so much difference in the past, with adequate facilities to be found almost everywhere along main routes. But in ten thousand 1946 miles we have discovered just eight clean rest rooms. There is no time to keep them clean, evidently, even where there is the inclination. Some sagacious company could win the eternal loyalty of a host of customers this summer simply by keeping its stations clean.

And checking into a hotel these days is something of an adventure in itself. Nobody, least of all the manager, apparently, knows what will happen next. The following is a faithful account of what can happen: We arrived at one of the country's leading hotels one evening. Three people ahead of me in line were told no accommodations were available. After checking on my reservation, the clerk told me there was no record of it. But I was ready for him. In my briefcase was their written confirmation. Obviously feeling that I had taken unfair advantage, the clerk made another search and assigned us to a room.

After buying some magazines and waiting ten minutes for a bellboy, I circled the lobby twice and finally found one hiding, evidently, behind a pillar. He was just out of the Army, he explained, and was new here, himself. We found the room for him. There were no curtains and no drapes on the windows and the people who had been walking on the walls recently had neglected to remove their rubbers. The bellboy tried the lamps to find out if any worked. One did.

My wife exclaimed happily, "Look, it has a bed!" That may sound like a joke, son, but for six bucks a day you sometimes get a couple of cots in a sample room, and I have seen the lavatory for a hotel-roof ballroom converted after the dancing was over into a bedroom which went for five dollars for the night, single. The four stall toilets and three washbowls were thrown in free.

So we were pleased to find a bed. The fact that the linen had not been changed in some time, we hoped to have remedied during dinner. But now for a shower. We resolved the question as to who should use the one bath towel by deciding to take turns, with me last. The hot water—that's the one you test first—worked swell. But there was no handle on the cold-water tap. In the bottom of my wife's handbag I found a pair of pliers and turned the tap on. While trying to regulate the hot and cold to the proper temperature, my coat and trousers got soaked, but my shoes hardly got wet at all.

* * *

A clerk at the courthouse in Jackson, Michigan, was helping an old colored man fill out application papers for a Civil Service janitor job. The clerk would read off the questions and write down the old man's answers.

"Do you belong," asked the clerk, "to the Nazi Bund, or any political party that plans to overthrow our government?"

"Yas, suh," answered the old colored man.

"Which one?" asked the clerk, surprised by the applicant's placid candor.

"The Republican Party," was the earnest reply.—*Wm. F. Owens.*

* * *

I could tell you more about our night in that hotel. Of the man next to us at dinner who was full of confident anticipation as he told the waitress he would like a double Myers's rum-and-coke, and ended up ninety minutes later shakily downing a jigger of straight Cuban rum with a water chaser. Or of the dogfight in the corridor, or of the maid who threw out my new magazines, or of the bells in the church belfry ten feet from our window. But you get the idea.

But most hotels do better than that, and occasionally you encounter one like the St. Anthony in San Antonio, which is a motorist's dream. Automobiles use a private entrance, where you register and are whisked to your room in a special elevator all in the space of two or three minutes, if you have a reservation. There is no traipsing across the lobby in clothes that look as embarrassed and tired as you do.

Shopping for new tires along the route is currently in vogue. It can be a spirited pastime, not unlike bargaining for souvenirs with natives in Mexican villages. There is a sporting side to it too, the element of chance being that the chances are you won't be able to buy any. But while waiting for the ladies to reappear from the powder room, you can, if your need is not desperate, spend many happy hours negotiating with the filling-station salesman.

He will deplore his lack of stock, tell you just when he got his last deliveries and to whom he sold them. He will freely discuss your chances of getting tires in the next city, holding, if he is a sadist, that they are good, or if he is more benevolent, admitting that there isn't a tire to fit your car within 500 miles. He will look over your tires carefully and with expert eye appraise their staying power. He will commiserate with you over each wound in the rubber and share your joy over some bit of tread that seems to be holding its own. But a new tire? Well, no.

The main problem in keeping tread and carcass together in the old recaps is really a matter of speed. Today's recaps are good for 12,000 to 20,000 miles if the side walls aren't damaged. But fifty miles an hour is top speed for them, and they'll go much farther at forty. Drivers who push them up to sixty or more can be seen in some numbers along the roadside, sadly gathering up the remnants of once-massive tread which ripped off from the casing.

MOTORISTS will find many changes in the landscape. The huge signs blatantly touting the Reno gambling den, Harold's Club, found 2,000 miles from Nevada, are faded now. Highway markings are often inadequate or missing altogether. There seem to be fewer than half the highway patrolmen there once were. The welcoming invitation of the word "Vacancy" will be missing wherever, homeless, you turn. But the Burma Shave signs, which almost disappeared during the war, are coming back.

Yes, your summer trip will be different, all right, in many, many ways. But the wonder worlds of Yosemite and Yellowstone, the inspiration of Grand Canyon, the magnificence of Grand Teton or Glacier Park's Going to the Sun Highway, the vivid colors of Bryce Canyon, the still beauty of the Painted Desert, the thunder of Niagara, the deep purple of Vermont hills at sunset—these, all these, will be there. What matter if the old bus falls apart? You will be seeing your own America.

THE END

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* * *

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* * *

It was made just for fun by Director Sidney Lanfield . . . and what could be more fitting than fun when Spring is here?

Paramount Pictures

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WITH HELEN PARKER

The scholar is sent off on a picnic. (Coburn, Beverly Tyler, Tom Drake, Richard Haydn.)

THE GREEN YEARS

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)
Charles Coburn, Tom Drake, Beverly Tyler, Hume Cronyn, Dean Stockwell, Richard Haydn, Jessica Tandy

THE word "green" seems to have some very special magic of its own. The Green Years has a quality of warmth and emotion that hasn't been seen since How Green Was My Valley.

A. J. Cronin ought to be very proud of the screen version of his novel, and will surely be satisfied with the well-knit screen play by Robert Ardrey and Sonya Levien.

Much thought and wisdom are evident in the casting of this story of an exceptional young man's development in a Scottish village, *circa* 1900.

Charles Coburn as Dandy Gow, the boy's great-grandfather, has his finest role to date. As a sort of aging Falstaff, a fighting liberal, he imparts strength and what Horatio Alger would call "the will to win" to the bright lad, Robbie Shannon (Dean Stockwell as a boy, and Tom Drake as a young man).

Robbie, the orphan, runs a stiff obstacle course in his grandparents' strict Calvinist household. He and his principal allies, his great-grandfather and his teacher (Richard Haydn—a fine actor who heretofore has only done comedy roles), have to resort to a great deal of collusion before he finally wins his scholarship to the university.

Standing by with a smile and a song is his soprano sweetheart (Beverly Tyler).

Opposing his every whim are Papa Leckie (Hume Cronyn), a greedy little man who abuses his very minor authority as a sanitary inspector, and Grandma Leckie (Gladys Cooper), a tight-lipped matriarch who causes Robbie great shame by making him a suit out of a flowered green petticoat.

The rest of the clan, Jessica Tandy, Norman Lloyd, Selena Royle, Wallace Ford, are all superb, and give a neat demonstration of what fine cohesion can be achieved without big names.

Atmospherically and musically The Green Years excels—particularly the panorama of the Highland Games where Dandy Gow dies of a stroke, full of life to the very last. The reading of Dandy's will, which Papa Leckie has been anticipating like a vulture, and which proves to be a bitter shock to him, is also a rich scene.

The world of The Green Years is at once real and unreal, naturalistic and idealized. Beautifully acted, it's young, hopeful, and particularly appropriate for this spring when all the world is ripe for its message.

Big and little scene-stealers, Dean Stockwell and Charles Coburn.

ICE TRAP

Continued from Page 35

nominiously on his stomach to firmer ice.

"Thanks," Axel said, dripping.

He strode across the ice to the Jupiter, clumped aboard, and went to the engine room. He changed to dry clothes.

"Sucker!" Baldy said caustically. "She hid back o' that pier and screamed just to hornswoggle you into going out there."

Light footsteps sounded on deck. Jenny Sweet's voice was peaches and cream. "I've brought a hot toddy, Captain. With cloves."

Axel hardly needed the steaming drink. He was warm inside already.

"Tell me, Miss Sweet," he said with a forced smile, "do you make a habit of playing peekaboo back of piers and screaming like a banshee?"

"The ice was firmer in the shade of the bridge. I screamed because I took a nasty spill. And if you don't mind, I'd like to have my toddy glass back, if you're through guzzling."

"Next time," Axel said, "you might just as well grind up the glass and feed it to me. It'd be quicker."

"Meaning that I'm poison to you, Captain Olsen?"

"Creeping paralysis would be a more accurate description. To change the subject, Miss Sweet, I've decided not to sell to you. I'm staying on the river with the Jupiter as long as there's one farmer with a rutabaga or a cabbage to ship. I'll keep operating if I have to use oars instead of steam. Now, how does your bankroll feel about that?"

"You're just being a—a stubborn squarehead," she blurted. Her heels tapped the stage plank and she was on her way back to the Valley Lily.

"And bang goes five thousand dollars, if Bill Casselman fails me," Axel sighed.

AXEL completed his paper work and caught the bus downtown to meet Bill Casselman. He walked into the dining room of the Muskingum House at exactly one o'clock, and singled out Casselman's incisive tweed-clad figure at a table.

Casselman was not alone. Opposite him sat Jenny Sweet. She wore something sassy in the spring-bonnet line and violets. Casselman, who was a bachelor and in his forties, had the enthralled expression of a kid at his first circus.

Axel walked woodenly to their table. Jenny Sweet said brightly, "Why, hello there!"

Casselman acted like he had to think twice to remember the face. "Oh, hello, Olsen," he said. "You know Miss Sweet of course."

"That's right," Axel stated. "But I wasn't aware you knew her."

"I?" said Casselman. "Why, we're old friends. We met at Pittsburgh when Miss Sweet came over to discuss that idea of mine of tying in a river trip on our vacation schedules."

"I thought it was my idea," Axel said.

He was making the wrong approach, he knew. But he had a hunch it didn't make any difference. Just how Jenny Sweet had got wind of the deal, he couldn't imagine. But he was cooked. The deal was cooked.

"I'll run along," Jenny Sweet said, "and leave you gentlemen to talk business alone."

Axel presented his prospectus in writing.

Casselman's brows arched. "A string orchestra? No swing music? That stuff is corny, my boy," he commented. "Corny. Vacationists like to cut loose, you know. And all these points of interest you've scheduled have a certain monotony. Historic monuments. Places where Indian battles were fought a century and a half ago. No pep to that sort of entertainment, is there?"

"What else?"

"There are plenty of angles," Casselman said. "Hay rides or barn dances at some of those sleepy old river towns in the evenings. Swimming parties on hot afternoons. Beauty contests. Fashion shows."

Axel sat looking at his hands. Beauty contests! Fashion shows! So these were some of the stunts Jenny Sweet had planned.

Casselman smiled tolerantly. "I'm afraid operating a pleasure boat is out of your line, Olsen," he said. "It is more than just steamboating. It requires a certain touch—the feminine touch, I might say."

AFTERWARD Axel found himself out on Main Street, walking alone. Jenny Sweet confronted him. She had been waiting for him.

"Just to keep the record straight," she said. "I didn't know you were dickering with Midwestern until Casselman told me, a few weeks ago. I had the idea in mind when I brought the Valley Lily on the Muskingum. I didn't steal your plan. We both happened to be competing for the same thing."

"O.K.," Axel said. "The record is straight."

"My offer to buy your packet still stands."

"I'll continue eating regularly," Axel said. "I'm young and strong. I don't need charity."

She was blinking like she had something in her eye. "You think I'm lying," she said. "You think Bill Casselman cut me in on that deal just because I'm a girl."

"Thanks for giving me credit for being able to think." He lifted his hat and left her.

It was almost nightfall when he finally went back to the steamboat mooring. The river was up another foot or more and the ice was whistling and moaning in torment. Baldy was making steam aboard the Jupiter. He was in the engine room, acting as his own fireman, for Axel had not yet signed a crew. The boiler

(*Continued on page 86*)

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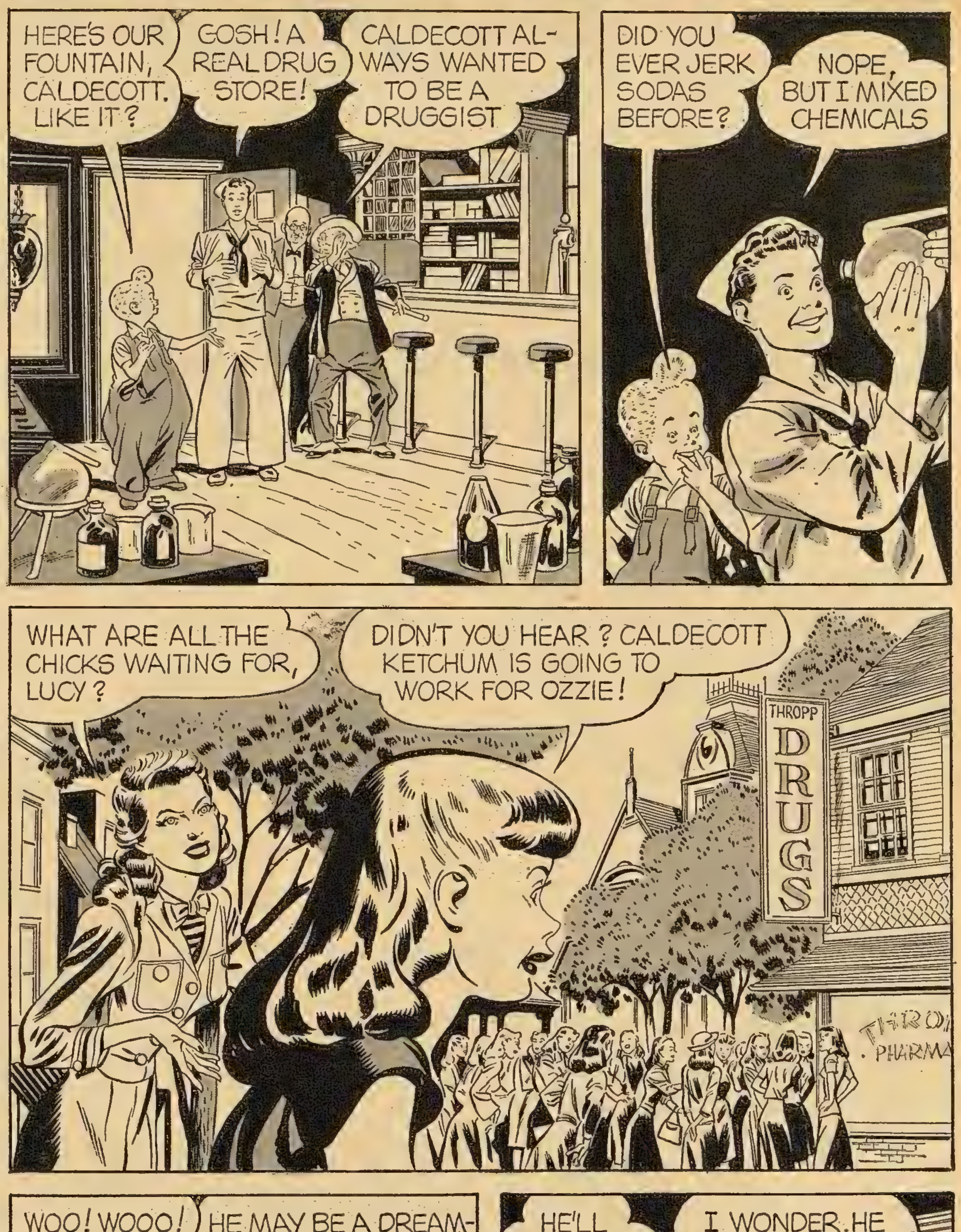
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DIDN'T YOU HEAR? CALDECOTT KETCHUM IS GOING TO WORK FOR OZZIE!
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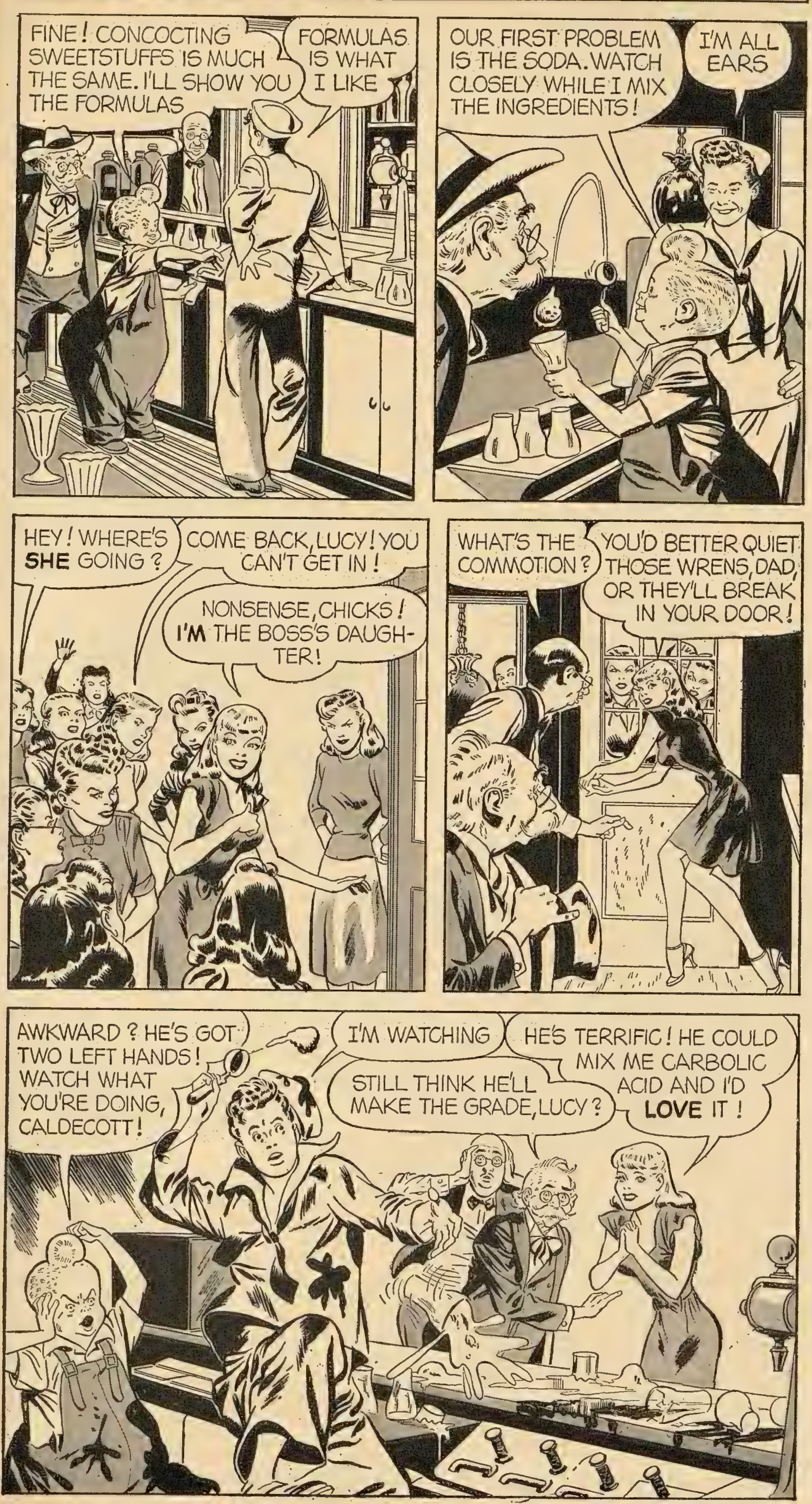
PHARMA
WOO! WOOO! ISN'T HE A DREAMBOAT, JUDGE?
HE MAY BE A DREAMBOAT, BUT HE'S NO SODA JERKER!
HE'LL CATCH ON TO IT SOON, I'M SURE
I WONDER. HE LOOKS PRETTY AWKWARD

FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**


FINE! CONCOCTING SWEETSTUFFS IS MUCH THE SAME. I'LL SHOW YOU THE FORMULAS
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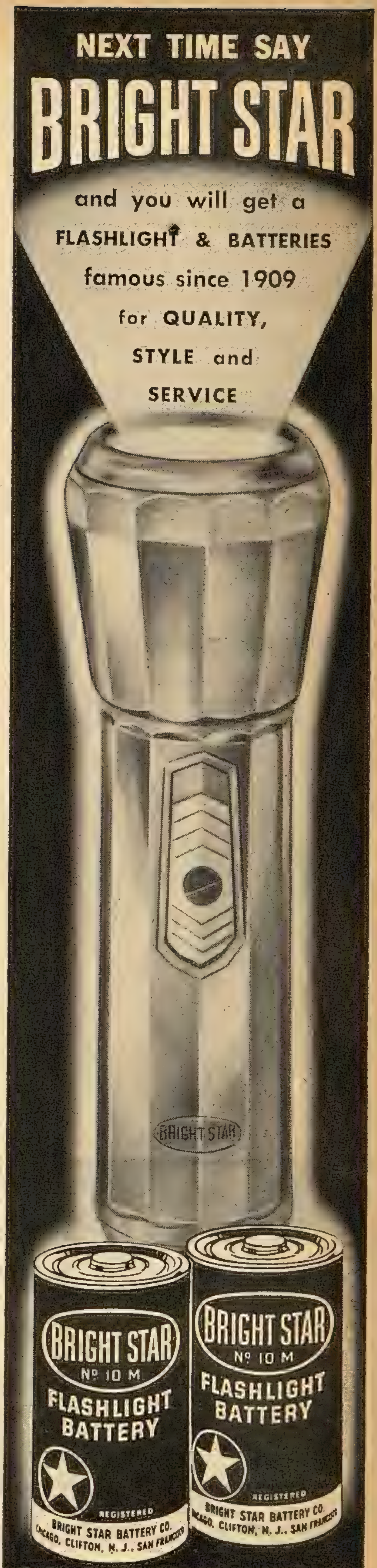
OUR FIRST PROBLEM IS THE SODA. WATCH CLOSELY WHILE I MIX THE INGREDIENTS!
I'M ALL EARS
HEY! WHERE'S SHE GOING?
COME BACK, LUCY! YOU CAN'T GET IN!
NONSENSE, CHICKS! I'M THE BOSS'S DAUGHTER!
WHAT'S THE COMMOTION?
YOU'D BETTER QUIET THOSE WRENS, DAD, OR THEY'LL BREAK IN YOUR DOOR!
AWKWARD? HE'S GOT TWO LEFT HANDS! WATCH WHAT YOU'RE DOING, CALDECOTT!
I'M WATCHING
STILL THINK HE'LL MAKE THE GRADE, LUCY?
HE'S TERRIFIC! HE COULD MIX ME CARBOLIC ACID AND I'D LOVE IT!

Continued next week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(*Continued from page 83*)

gauge showed headway pressure.

"The Valley Lily gets the tourist deal," Axel said wearily. "Beauty contests and hay rides in the moonlight. That's what sunk us. It's time we were getting off the river, Baldy. I was only beating my gums when I pulled that line about staying in business. We could keep going a few months, I suppose. But it'll be slow starvation. The Valley Lily will begin making real money this year."

"Chances are there won't be any Valley Lily on the river by this time tomorrow," Baldy said calmly.

Axel stared. Baldy led the way to the top deck and peered through the darkness at Jenny Sweet's packet. The tops of the protective barrier of pilings were some three feet out of water.

"That mooring down there is no good," Baldy said. "Summertimes in low water it stands up, but as soon as you get a little rise, the river cuts it out twenty, thirty feet deep again. She had that line of pilings set twenty feet deep last fall, when she laid up for the winter. But they're not settin' in any twenty feet of bottom now. I know, for I sounded it from the skiff this afternoon. Them pilings are down in no more'n two, three feet of bottom now. When the ice starts playin' tag with 'em, they'll go over like toothpicks."

BALDY let that sink in. "She'll find pieces of her boat all the way to Marietta after the break-up shoves it over the dam. Then who'll have the river?"

"I see," Axel said.

"We're safe enough here in the lee of the pier," Baldy added. "That's why I got steam up, so we can snug right up against the pier. The ice won't bother us any."

"She could move the Valley Lily up here against the pier too," Axel said slowly. "There's room."

"Not without steam, she can't. That engineer she's kept aboard all winter is a south Mississippi riverman. Don't know much about ice. He thinks they're safe as money in the bank, an' he went ashore."

Baldy paused and glared at Axel. "Sa-ay, you're not soft enough to tell her all this, are you? After all she's done to you? Anyway, there she goes ashore too. There's nobody aboard that packet now. What happens is none of your misery, is it?"

Axel said he guessed it wasn't. He watched Jenny Sweet get into her roadster and drive away. Dressed for the evening, no doubt. Cocktails for two, he supposed. Likely it was Bill Casselman.

The ice groaned in the darkness. Axel went into his cabin. He changed to dungarees and a flannel shirt, then hurried to the Valley Lily.

Baldy followed him. "Softy!" Baldy scoffed. "I knew all the time you'd weaken."

"Under that outer shell of yours," Axel said, "you're just a lump of putty yourself."

They inspected boiler gauges and went to work. In a quarter of an hour they had the fire laid, and Baldy went back to the Jupiter to tend their own boiler.

It would take time to make steam on the Valley Lily. And now time ran out. The river ice, glinting coldly in the lights on the bridge overhead, seemed unchanged—for a moment. Then dark jigsaw patterns appeared in its face.

Axel heard Baldy yell, "Break-up! Yowie! She's arollin'! There she goes!"

Abruptly the river dissolved into chaos. Gouts of ice up-ended like monsters. They broke and fell on neighbors with growling ferocity. A great floe ground against the piling barrier, and the timbers began to lean drunkenly.

Axel raced to the boilers and swung the coal scoop. But the steam gauge remained lifeless.

"WHAT in the world!"

He swung around. Jenny Sweet stood staring at him. She wore her jersey skirt and cardigan and wool stockings and walking shoes. She had a market bag in her arms.

It hadn't been cocktails or Bill Casselman after all. She had merely gone marketing for her supper. Axel felt suddenly forgiving.

"Your packet's in a pickle," he said. "Your ice guard is the bunk."

The Valley Lily jarred violently beneath their feet as a floe charged against her hull. Axel took a look. The pilings were being pushed aside by the crowding ice.

He came back, peered into the furnace. "Fire burn and caldron bubble," he entreated, making fanning motions. "Oh, Lord, this is going to be close!"

"What can I do?" Jenny Sweet was wan around the lips.

"Pray," said Axel, "and get ready to jump. There's a dam not far downstream, you know, and acres of ice cakes that play rough, and a rapids and everything."

No steam. The gauge was a fiend. It was a devilish contrivance. It would turn a man's hair white watching it. Axel said as much.

"Your hair is yellow," Jenny Sweet said, swinging a clinker bar, "but it would be handsome even if it turns white."

The Valley Lily reeled from a punch to the midriff. Jenny grabbed Axel's arm and screamed. Both of them fell in a heap as the packet took a sudden sickening bound.

Axel heard the twang of a parting mooring. There was a clatter of bull rails as a backlash raked the foredeck. The Lily was wedged in a nest of upended floes, and the pilings were uprooted helping the onslaught.

Axel carried Jenny Sweet over the ice to shore. "Stay put," he said.

The first turmoil of the break-up calmed, and the Valley Lily lay motionless for a time among grounded floes, but the rising river was pushing and worrying the mass. Then the packet and her cradle of upended ice and pilings began moving again, drifting down the shore.

Out in the river, open water was showing. Baldy climbed to the texas of the Jupiter, peering upstream.

"Only about a mile of it went out with that first break," he said. "But the rest of it'll be comin' down any minute."

"Stand by to cast off," Axel bawled. "I'll handle the pilot house."

The Valley Lily was receding into the gloom downstream, along with her escort of ice and pilings. The current was now carrying her out into the river.

"Great jumpin' catfish!" Baldy howled. "If we're caught out there when the main break-up comes down, we'll all go over the dam."

Quite a gathering of onlookers had arrived on the landing, attracted by the break-up. Axel pushed his head out from the pilot house. "Anybody there with a small boat ready for service?" he asked.

He got an affirmative answer from a lanky youth. "My outboard speeder is in a boathouse up here, mister."

"Better get the speeder afloat, in case we have to abandon ship," Axel said.

Jenny Sweet tugged at Axel's arm. "I forbid this," she said shakily.

"On any other chin but yours," Axel said, "a smudge of coal dust wouldn't be pretty. Go ashore and wash your face."

Volunteers from among the spectators cast off the lines. Axel backed the Jupiter into the river, choosing a lane between scattered floes. He rang full ahead as he steadied the packet, and steamed in pursuit of the drifting Valley Lily.

JENNY SWEET was still at his elbow. "You'll only lose your steamboat too," she wailed.

"I'm a little thick above the ears when it comes to thinking up barn dances or organizing fashion shows," Axel said, "but at least I can pilot a steamboat. Now go away and let me handle something more in my line. This is my last fling. Let me enjoy it."

"You're a stubborn pigheaded Swede," she said tearfully.

"I have not the slightest doubt that you told the truth about that Casselman deal," Axel remarked. "I mention that just to show that I'm in favor of keeping the record straight also. And I thank you for offering me five thousand dollars as a consolation prize."

"I knew you'd take that attitude," she wept. "Blast you and your infernal pride."

He overtook the Lily two hundred yards above the dam. Floating ice was vanishing over the brink, diving into the turmoil below.

The Lily was drifting broadside, with a collection of floes and pilings still trapped against her flank. Axel laid the Jupiter alongside the mass and Baldy goat-leaped across the debris, dragging a hawser. He dropped the bight of the line over the bollard on the Lily's foredeck and came scrambling back aboard the Jupiter.

The derelict packet, weighted with her debris, was as unwieldy as a barge. The shore continued to drift past. The spray from the dam drew nearer, and the Lily seemed to tower right above the brink.

The young chap with the outboard speeder was standing by. "Take Miss Sweet and my engineer ashore," Axel ordered.

"Look upstream, Axel," Baldy howled from below. "Here comes the main run of ice. Time for everybody to abandon ship."

Axel didn't look. The shore line wasn't slipping by now. The speeder came alongside, but Jenny Sweet didn't get into it. She appeared on the prow carrying an ax.

She squared away to sever the hawser that would release the Jupiter from its tow.

"Wait!" Axel bawled.

The Jupiter's paddles had finally halted the drifting Lily. Abruptly the Lily came around like a lady, her bow upstream. The ice and pilings went sailing clear and went over the dam.

THE Lily was in tow. The shore line began to unreel in the opposite direction. Axel now looked upstream. He could make out the white glint of oncoming ice.

He stayed with his tow. The Jupiter reached the mooring back of the bridge pier five minutes before the main run of ice came charging by. And that was long enough to warp the Valley Lily safely alongside, where the bulk of the big stone pier protected both steamboats.

Axel uttered a sigh as the last line was made fast. He searched around and found Jenny Sweet at last, standing alone with her elbows on the rail of the boiler deck. He placed his elbows there too.

"I've been thinking," she said, without looking at him, "that with both of us working together, maybe we can build up enough business in a year or two to keep two packets busy. We could form a partnership."

"When did you start thinking along that line?" Axel asked.

Her cheeks were on fire. "Last summer. It isn't a new idea with me."

"I've had it in mind for about the same length of time," Axel said. "You are a dangerous woman, summer or winter, and particularly in the springtime. How would you like a name like Olsen to use outside of business hours? Mrs. Axel Pershing Olsen, for instance?"

"It's a fine name," Jenny Sweet said fervently. "I'd just love it. I'm glad you thought of that. You think of the nicest things."

There was no longer any necessity for anyone keeping his elbows on the rail of the boiler deck.

THE END

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LARYNX UNLIMITED

Continued from Page 17

band, Chet England, an expert at the language who recently returned from duty with the Third Army in Germany.

Mel waved the script in front of Chet's eyes. "Can you teach me to spout this like a native?" he demanded.

For the next three nights the midnight oil burned brightly in the Englands' San Fernando Valley home. Chet pronounced the words slowly. Mel copied it all down phonetically, and practiced. After the broadcast, a good friend inquired why he had never mentioned his command of German.

EXCEPT for assignments like that, Mel creates most of his own characters. He can spot one in a split second, and remember new inflections unfailingly. One Saturday afternoon he was holed up in the garage, mending a toy for his seven-year-old son, when a beggar knocked at the door.

"Say, buddy," he whined almost tearfully, "I've just walked three miles from town, and I haven't eaten since yesterday. Could ya gimme a cup of coffee, please?"

Mel raced back to the house, returned with coffee and sandwiches, and pulled up a chair. He kept the tramp talking and eating until he had memorized the voice. That's how Burns and Allen's wistful Postman was born.

"Casting bread on the waters, you know," Mel explains.

Ever since he lisped through his first nursery rhyme, he has been addicted to mimicry. There was one hitch for a while, though. Until 1945 he had never been east of Las Vegas, Nevada. He was a stranger to the Southern drawl, the New England broad "a," the Middle Western twang, and any number of other regional accents. Radio was the solution, and Mel capitalized on it. He listened to amateur hours, quiz programs, Mr. Anthony's Court of Human Relations—all gold mines of provincial speech. When he finally came to New York last year with the Judy Canova show, he bought a newspaper on the Grand Concourse and was hailed as "landsman" by a native of the Bronx.

Actually Mel was born in San Francisco. When he was seven, the family migrated to Portland—a blow the Oregon educational system will never forget. Mel played hooky to sneak into vaudeville shows, but he never missed the school theatrical productions. Several times he narrowly escaped expulsion because he insisted on inserting all the censored gags back into the act at the zero moment.

He had been studying the violin for eight years when opportunity knocked. A transient five-piece band needed a new man. Unfortunately, however, it already had a fiddler. Never one to be fazed by trifles, Mel tossed his violin aside and taught himself the tuba.

In 1927 he got his first radio break, singing comedy songs on a Portland station. In 1931 he became musical director of the Orpheum Theater, and the following year found him in San Francisco, emceeing Road Show, one of radio's early variety programs. When he couldn't get a network audition, he got married instead, and whisked his wife, Estelle, back to Portland.

Then began the rat race. He wrote, produced, and acted all but one of the parts for a half-hour show, Cobwebs and Nuts, six nights a week. Estelle, former secretary to a Los Angeles attorney, played the one female voice. On the side he turned out scripts for Portland's Breakfast Club program and was master of ceremonies for an amateur hour over KEX.

IT was on this program that Mel first blossomed as a trachea full of alter egos. One evening a blizzard raged outside the studio. Inside, four people were huddled around a microphone—Mel, Estelle, the announcer, and the staff pianist. Nobody else showed up. No spectators, no amateurs, no audience. The script was ad libbed. It was mostly Mel, interviewing himself, doubling as a hillbilly yodeler, a guitar player, a comedy singer, a violin soloist. When he ran out of breath, the others came to his rescue. The next day came the postman—and the anticlimax. Not a letter in the mailbag. "It just goes to show you," Mel points out, "how many friends these amateurs have."

By 1935 radio's promising bundle of energy was a frayed bundle of nerves, working sixteen hours a day and wearing out his tonsils. Estelle predicted either the sanitarium or Hollywood. So they boarded a train for Hollywood. Mel sweated out the next year and a half working on local shows and trying to wangle an audition on one of the major networks. Finally he got a call from a publicity agent who had been giving him the run-around. "Come on over," he told Mel. "We're going to give you guys who think you're funny a chance to be funny."

Mel was off like a shot. Someone

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shoved a mike at him and he obliged with everything he had.

"Why the hell didn't you tell me you could do all these things?" the publicity agent demanded.

With very little effort Mel could have clipped the guy. Instead, he signed on the dotted line to perform as several characters with Joe Penner over CBS.

But he hopes that agent was listening in last February when he appeared on the Hall of Fame broadcast in a sketch called, We're the Men Behind the Men Who Get the Laughs. With him were Bob Hope's Jerry Colonna, Eddie Cantor's Bert (Mad Russian) Gordon, Ed Gardner's Charlie (Finnegan) Cantor, and Eddie Marr, the gadget salesman. All were honored as the outstanding stooges of this radio age.

In the years between Penner and the Hall of Fame, Mel found he had virtually deeded his soul to radio, leaving no time for the Blanc hobbies: fishing, photography, and Ogden Nash. By 1943 he was lending his larynx to fourteen shows a week and totaling more performances for the Armed Forces Radio Service than any other actor. His was the voice behind all the snafu training films—the Trigger Joe Series for the Air Corps and the Health Series for the Navy and Marine Corps. He was broadcasting regularly on most of the special programs beamed to G.I.s, such as Command Performance, Mail Call, the G.I. Journal, Jubilee, and soloing for Are You a Genius?

Nor was that all. Besides rehearsals and broadcasts at the radio station, there were recordings at Warner Brothers' studio, and, since April, 1945, a hardware store in Venice. Mel's father-in-law, Bill Rosenbaum, runs the store; Mel does all the buying. Their motto is "Everything first," and Mel knocks himself out living up to it.

THIS year Mel is executing what—for him—amounts to a slow-down. Except for occasional one-shot performances, he works as laryngeal stuntman exclusively for Warner Brothers' celluloid circus and four of radio's major comedy shows—Burns and Allen, Abbott and Costello, Jack Benny, and Judy Canova. That nets him about $75,000 a year, and any more would only go up in taxes anyway. Besides, it's about time the private lives of the Blancs had a break.

Out home in Playa del Rey there's Estelle and seven-year-old Noel, who right now is well on the way to doubling for the old man. Mel got home early one day and came upon Noel entertaining the neighborhood children in the living room. "*Si*—and time is important," Noel was saying. "Remember—thirty days hacienda, April, June, and sombrero. All the rest have thirty-one, except Gypsy Rose Lee—and she has next to nothing, no?" Those were Pedro's lines from the Judy Canova show the night before. And spoken like a true Blanc.

So now Estelle has two supermimics to contend with. She doesn't mind, for her husband usually plays it straight in real life.

Being around Mel is never dull. Ask Estelle, who never knows whether he'll turn up at the end of the day with a new voice, a new fishing rod, or a new watch. His watch collection is the envy of all Hollywood. His favorite, a solid gold timepiece which his wife gave him last Christmas, practically sits up and talks. Once, when an unsuspecting stranger on a bus asked him for the correct time, Mel jerked it out of his pocket, pushed a button, and let loose a miniature carillon concert that ended in a beautiful friendship. The stranger missed his stop in order to find out how the gadget worked, and Mel took him home for dinner.

MEL likes people and he likes to be himself among them. He figures he can use the practice: aside from occasional straight roles on the Dr. Christian program, the Screen Guild, and the Lux Radio Theater, he seldom gets a chance to exercise his natural voice. He's worried for fear his voices will eventually conceal his identity completely.

"Look what happened when I played a straight role on the Jack Benny show, using my own voice," he says sadly. "I was asked a million times who did the part. And when I told them, they didn't believe me. They still don't."

THE END

****

At a Texas Army camp, a long-eared, sad-eyed mule named Brad had done his work well and faithfully. Just before the outfit shipped for overseas, a long list of promotions for the enlisted personnel was placed on the bulletin board.

Beneath it, the men tacked on a resolution:

"Whereas the mule, Brad, has performed acts beyond the call of duty, and whereas he has gained the respect and admiration of this company, be it resolved that, henceforward, he shall be addressed by the more dignified name of Bradford, and that he is hereby promoted to the rank of horse."—*Wall Street Journal.*

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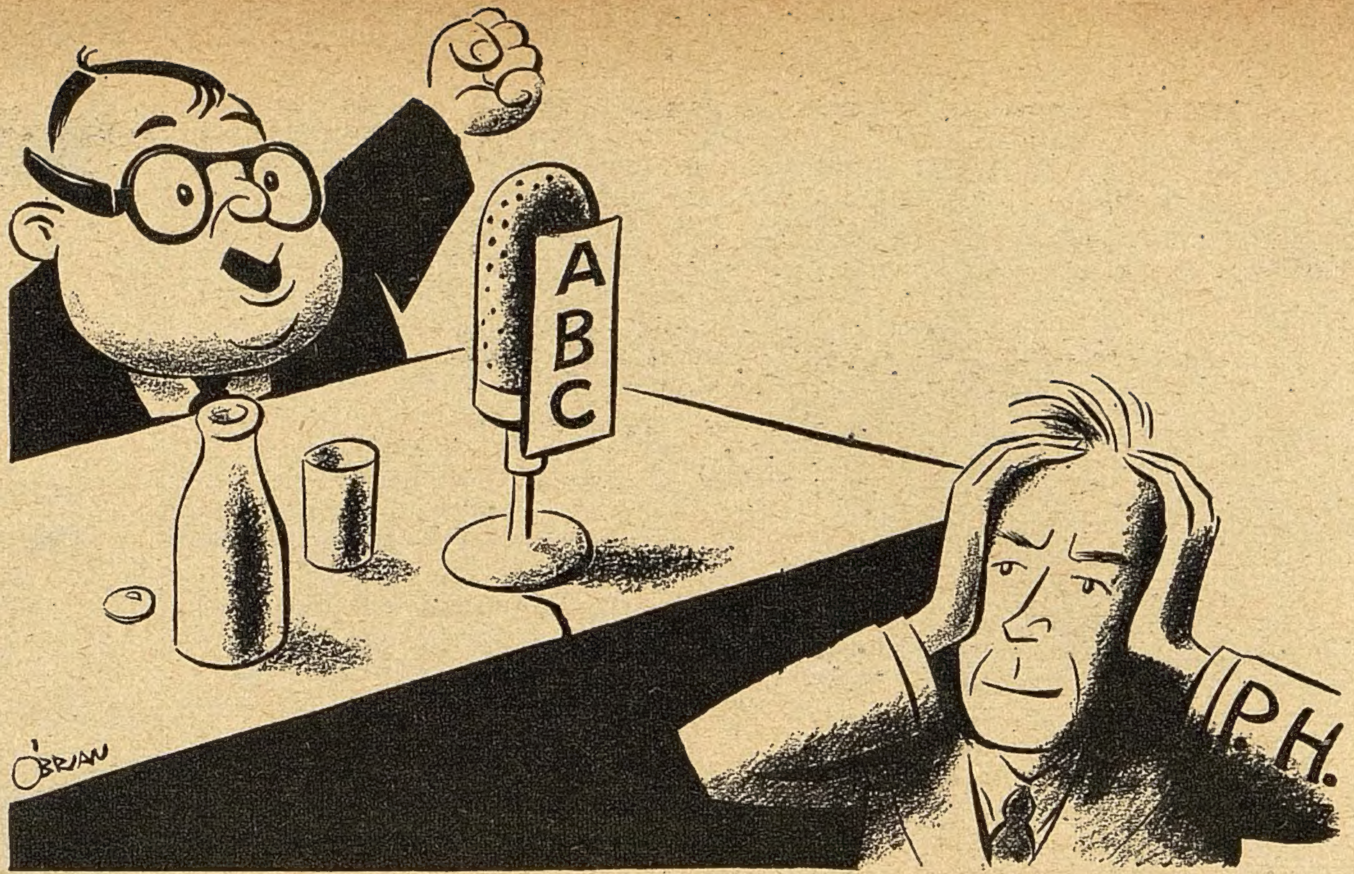

BEER VERSUS BREAD

MR. F. H. LaGUARDIA, who is on the air every Sunday night under the sponsorship of Liberty Magazine, broadcasts without censorship of any kind. Liberty wanted it that way in the beginning and continues to want it that way. We uphold LaGuardia's right to a free and untrammeled expression of his views.

This does not mean, however, that Liberty must always agree with LaGuardia. He has dissented from some of our opinions in the past and now we are going to dissent from some of his.

On several recent occasions LaGuardia has stated that the American people are faced with a choice between bread and beer. In our opinion this is demagoguery. Actually, we face no such choice. The statement is not in accord with the facts. In 1945 eight ten thousandths of our wheat crop went into beer making. Now no wheat whatever is being used.

The brewing industry is not in conflict with the government grain-conservation program. The brewers support it. Grains used in brewing are not ordinarily processed for human consumption. Forty per cent of what is used is returned as cattle feed, enriched to three times its original nutritive content. Inasmuch as the big bulk of our grain supply is fed to livestock and must be again this year, we gain rather than lose through brewing. We believe it a highly dangerous error to implant in the minds of the public the idea that we can discharge our obligations to a starving world by cutting down on beer drinking.

As Director General of UNRRA, LaGuardia has had the subject of food much on his mind in recent weeks. This is understandable. Upon his shoulders rests the responsibility of feeding a stricken world, and LaGuardia is a man who takes his responsibilities seriously. He has tackled this great humanitarian task with characteristic vigor. In this job he has Liberty's utmost sympathy and support. We believe the food and supplies he needs should be made available at once. We believe all Americans are willing to share our abundance to save lives and prevent famine and destitution abroad—if we are shown how to go about it.

While we want to reiterate that Liberty has neither the desire nor the intention of riding herd over what LaGuardia says on the radio, we do suggest that he forgo demagogic utterances and give us more constructive information on how to save food.

UNRRA's policies and plans can have no hope of success unless they are based upon a precise awareness of the facts. We hope LaGuardia is not planning to feed any great numbers of the starving on the grain he imagines would be saved by curtailing brewing or distilling. These legitimate industries are no drain on our food supply. If we invite a return of bootlegging, vast quantities of priceless grain will disappear into illegitimate channels. There will be great waste. The residue will be thrown away instead of being returned as cattle feed.

We cannot afford in this dangerous and tragic world situation to focus the attention of our people and those of other countries on unproductive means of food conservation to the neglect of policies which will get real results.

Paul Hunter

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Spain's great bullfighter

Juan Belmonte

1 **"Bullfighting as an amateur** was my hobby back in Mexico City," reports Barnaby Conrad, a friend of Canadian Club Whisky. "So when in Sevilla, Spain, writing my new book, I made for the bullring with the hope of arranging a fight. It was closed, but . . . 'Senor!' the *guardia civil* at the gate said, 'here comes the great Juan Belmonte. Perhaps he can help you!' *Did* he?—no man was ever more gracious . . .

2 **"When he learned** I'd fought bulls, he invited me to his farm where he was training with young bulls. Seeing him work, I appreciated why he is called *El Terremoto*—The Earthquake.

3 **"Then—'Your turn!'** he shouted at me. My little bull was a scrapper—had me on my mettle pronto. Under the eye of El Terremoto and his celebrated son, Juanito, I really strutted my stuff.

4 **"Later,** as the bulls filed to pasture, Belmonte told of his ambition to visit the States. 'Soon the Pan American Clippers will be flying there,' he said. 'Then I may go.'

5 **"But I found** there's one great Yankee pleasure he's already acquainted with. For that afternoon in his patio I had the honor of toasting his unmatchable artistry in the unmatchable flavor of America's favorite imported whisky—*Canadian Club!"*

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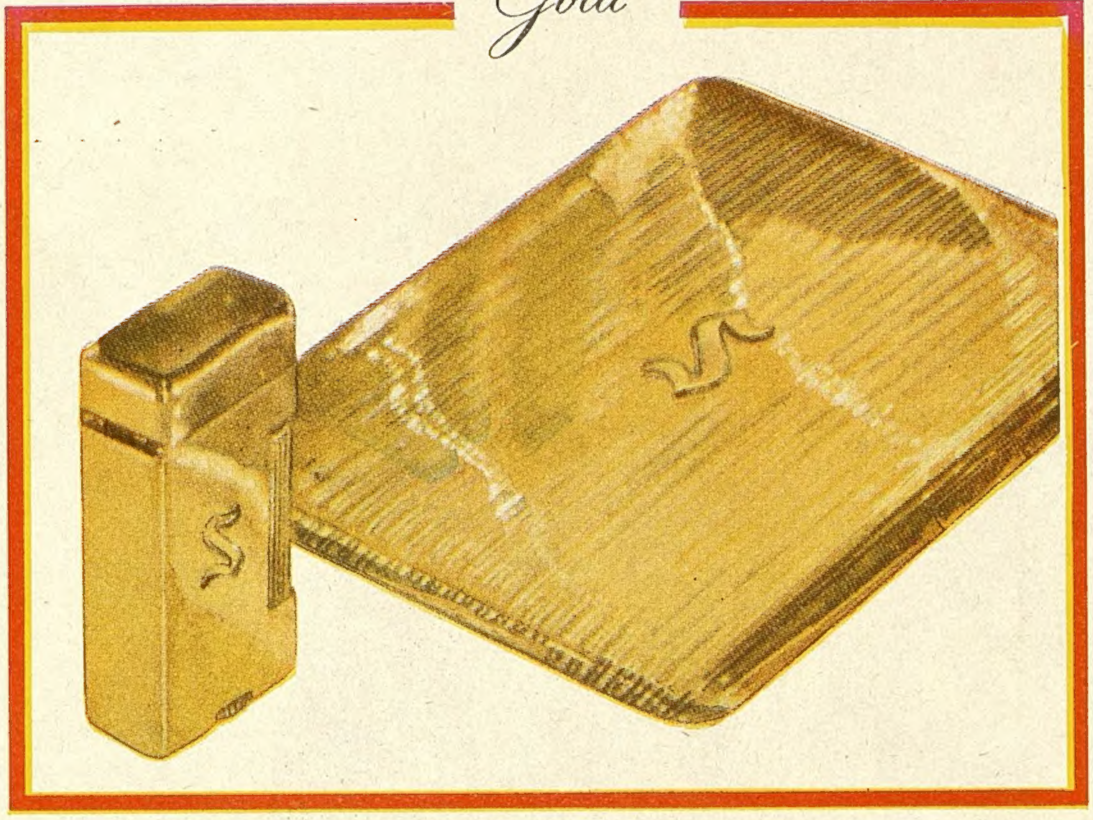

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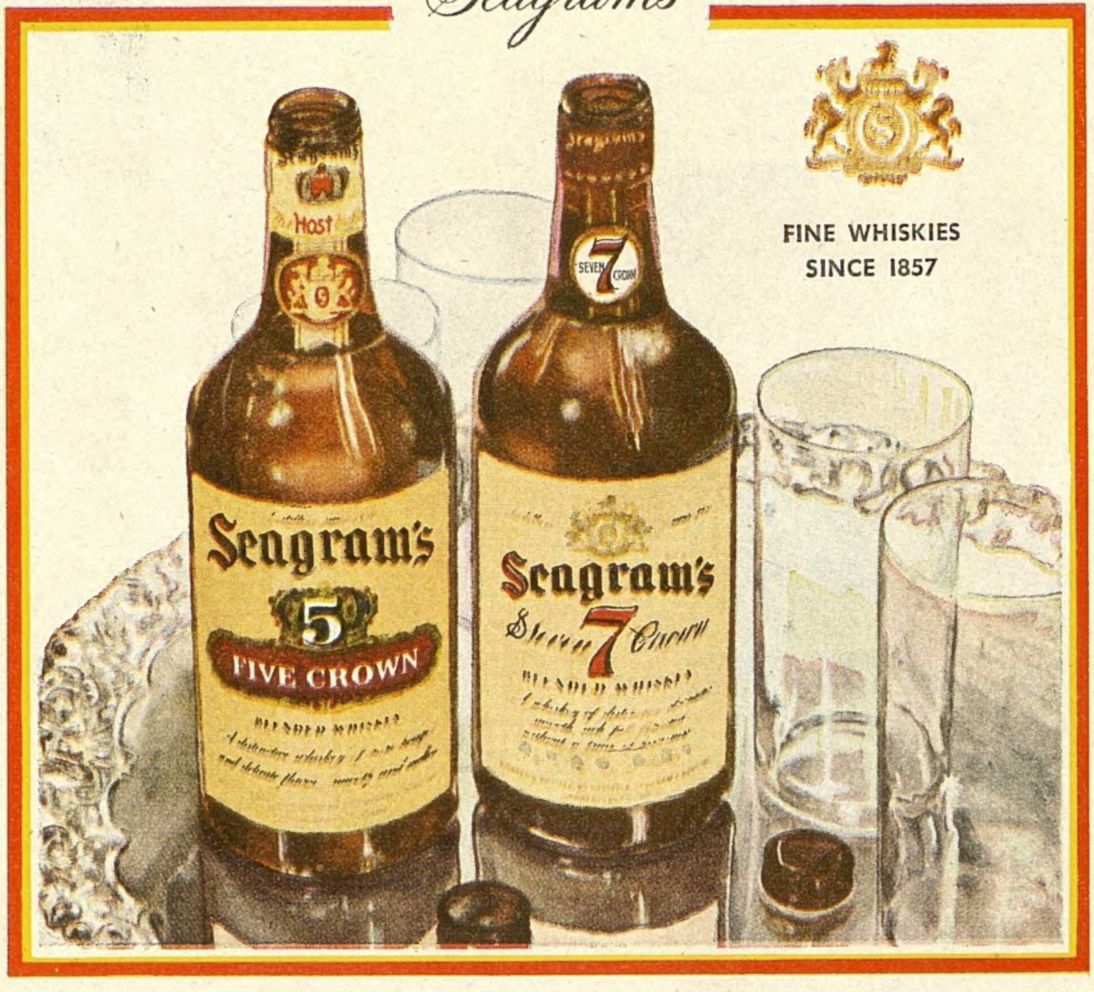
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